

A  
GENERAL HISTORY  
OF  
UTTOXETER

By Jon Edmunds

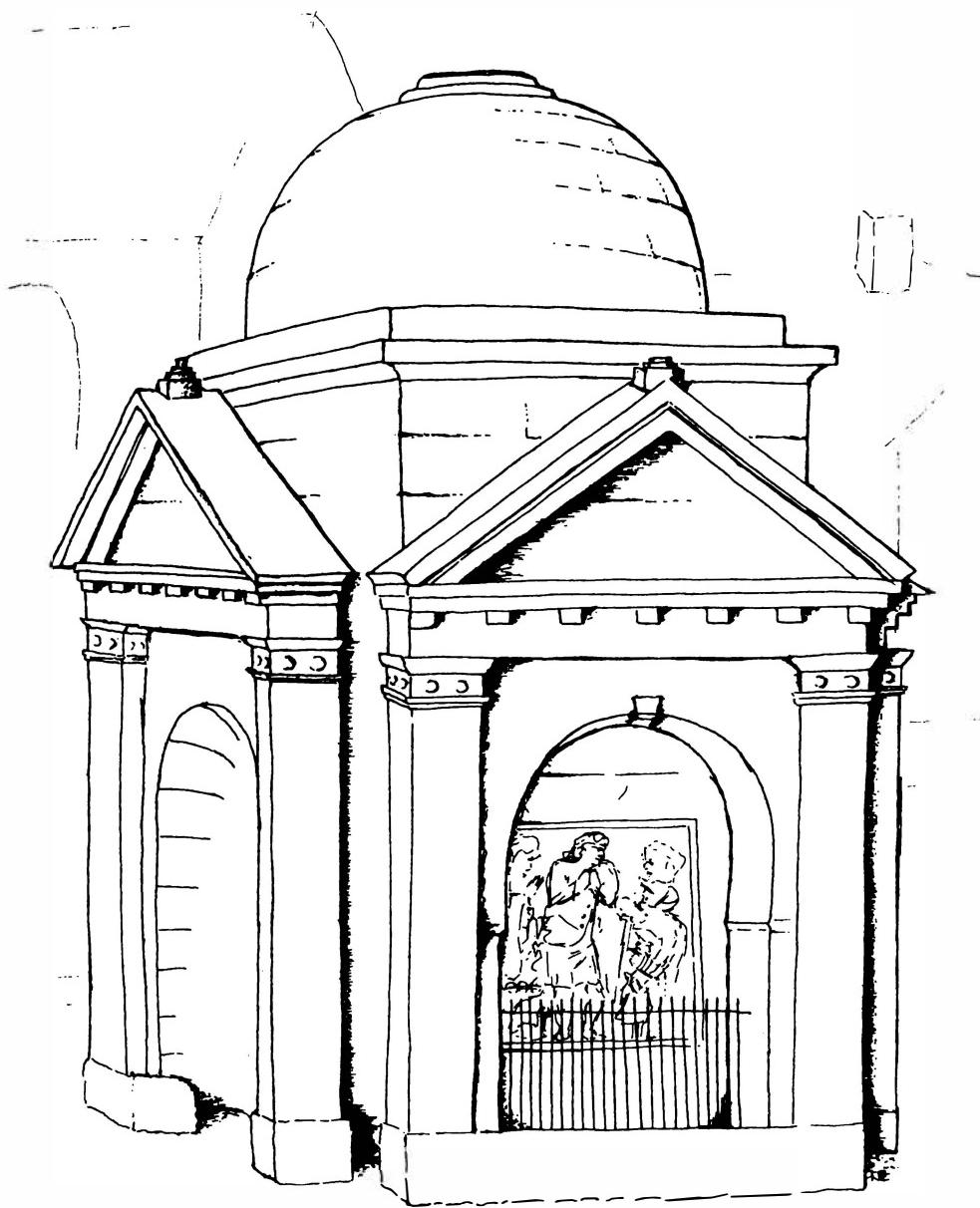


Mrs. Cooper,  
with best wishes

for Edmunds.

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**SAMUEL JOHNSON MEMORIAL**

## P R E F A C E

*Anybody who wishes to make a study of the history of Uttoxeter has to be grateful for the pioneering work done on the subject in the last century by Francis Redfern. Some of his findings are now out of date or have been found to be wrong. About ten years ago W.G. Torrance sought to remedy this situation by a series of pamphlets in which he brought Redfern's work up to date. Torrance was a keen researcher of the town's history but unfortunately the pamphlets do not provide us with a coherent narrative of Uttoxeter's past. They are filled with masses of useful information but it is not presented in the form of a history of the town.*

*This book attempts to remedy the situation. It is a general history of the town trying to put Uttoxeter into the context of national and county history. I am most grateful for the help I received from the Uttoxeter branch of the Staffordshire County Library, the local studies section of Burton Public Library, the William Salt Library in Stafford, the Rev. W.H.O. Moss (particularly for the generous access which he gave me to the Parish Registers), Edward Peltor and David Price. My wife has kindly put up with my long hours of seclusion poring over books or the typewriter and contributed the illustrations.*

*For transforming the manuscript into a book all credit must go to the Uttoxeter Civic Society. They have been kind enough to have confidence in its possibilities and take from my shoulders the burden of publication.*

*May 1982.*

*J. Edmunds.*

## CHAPTER 1 — Beginnings (to 1066)

Uttoxeter is an easy town to by-pass in this age of rapid personal transport. As a small, market town, it has importance and significance to its inhabitants and the surrounding area but none of the pull of some towns as old as itself. It boasts no ancient or magnificent churches, its domestic architecture has no grandeur or special antiquity, it has no truly illustrious sons and even its economic history is humdrum. Yet for all that, the study of its history is important. Just because of the fact that it lacks special virtues it is of special value to the historian. It is a market town and always has been for some seven hundred years. It is the centre for the rich dairying area of the Dove valley. This has always been the case. Industry may have made Burton-on-Trent or Stoke-on-Trent into substantial urban complexes but these places have changed out of all recognition in the last two hundred years where Uttoxeter has retained much of its traditional function. It is easier to trace the shape and way of life of Uttoxeter in earlier ages just because it has largely resisted industrial domination.

The very position of Uttoxeter made it a suitable centre for trade, standing as it does with the River Dove on the East and the River Tean to the North. Uttoxeter stands on gravel while the hills surrounding it are of clay and marl. All these rocks were deposited by glaciers during the four great ice ages of 600,000 to 25,000 years ago. Uttoxeter is sited at the point where four major glaciers or ice sheets met. From the North was the Penine glacier, from the East the North Sea glacier, from the North-West the Irish Sea glacier and from the West the Arenig glacier. The moraines of these glaciers left considerable deposits at this confluence and these make up the rocks and soil of Uttoxeter and the Dove valley. (1)

However, we have yet to come across the first mention of Uttoxeter as a settlement. Prior to the conquest of Britain by the Romans in the 40's A.D., we know a little about Staffordshire. It was inhabited by the Cornavii tribe. To the East were the Coritani. They were Iron Age peoples who would have lived in villages dominated by ties of family and kin but subject to the authority of a tribal leader. Their villages of wooden huts were widely scattered over the county but the population was scanty. With the higher land in the North, the general level of afforestation of the time and the lack of river transport in much of the county there was little spur to settlement.

In the last century B.C. the Cornavii came to be dominated by the Brigantes from further North but the area fell easily enough to the Romans when, in 48 A.D., Ostorius Scapula moved North. The Brigantes did not finally settle with the Romans for some time. Their Queen, Cartimandua, became a client ruler but this did not satisfy all the Brigantes. In 69 A.D. some revolted against their own Queen and the Romans. The area was conquered again, this time by Petilius Cerialis. Not until 79 A.D. did Agricola settle the matter completely. Seventy five years later the Brigantes revolted again but this was too much for the Romans, by then firmly established in Britain. The rebellion was crushed and the Romans took over the area completely. (2)

Yet this should not cause us to jump to the conclusion that Staffordshire, and Uttoxeter within it, was an area of important Roman settlement. The county remained very sparsely populated. We may be talking of hundreds rather than thousands of people. Roman roads ran through the area carrying soldiers and trade to the major cities of the Roman occupation but there was no Roman settlement at Uttoxeter.

Francis Redfern, in his pioneering history of Uttoxeter (1865 and 1881), was convinced otherwise. He based his conclusion on the roads nearby, the need for some settlement at this point and the name of the town, which he saw as having a Roman ending. In the second edition of his book (1881) he mentioned a dig that had taken place in the playground of the Grammar School in 1876 and had discovered pottery which Redfern took to be Roman. W.G. Torrance, in Part 1 of his series of pamphlets "Following Francis Redfern," argues convincingly against the idea of Roman settlement. The pottery is revealed as mediaeval and the origin of the town's name as Saxon (of which more later). He also clears up the subject of the roads. Watling Street, from London to Chester, runs some distance from Uttoxeter. The Icknield Way did go from Burton to Lichfield but again was clear of Uttoxeter. Redfern's claim to a settlement because of a Roman road was based on his belief in a 'Via Devana' which passed close by Uttoxeter. Torrance amply demonstrates that there was no such road and so we may conclude, as we began, that there was no Roman settlement at, what is now, Uttoxeter. (3)

Serious study of Uttoxeter therefore, begins with Saxon settlement. It was mentioned above that the origin of the town's name was Saxon. Geographers of the Tudor period saw the name as derived from Uttok and -ester and therefore either Roman or Saxon. This was the view of Camden, Leland and Holinshed. However, great care must be exercised in talking of origins and derivations since Uttoxeter has been spelled in a strange variety of ways: Uttoxeter, Uttoxesather, Utcester, Utkocester, Ullcester, Tocester, Otteshather, Uttoxesate, Tokesather, Wutokesher, Wittockshather, Uttoxhautr, Taksettore, Hutockeshorthor and Wotocheshede. The possible derivations all suggest settlement. Uttock could be from the Saxon word for mattock, suggesting land cleared for use by that implement. Or it may derive from Stocca, a tree trunk, suggesting an area cleared of trees or a settlement with a strong fortification of tree trunks. Or the name may derive from out-take, meaning a part of the forest that had been cleared for a village. I would not claim to be any sort of an expert on place-names but would suggest that, in view of the variety of spellings of the town's name, any definite conclusion as to the origin of that name is probably wishful thinking.

So what was life like in this small Saxon settlement that became Uttoxeter? Undoubtedly it was brief and short. In a settlement claimed from nearby forest land labour in the fields was long. With few implements to help the people they relied on labour to produce their food. This food itself would have been monotonous and, on the whole, lacking in great flavour. All they needed for their lives would have had to be produced in the village. Communications with other settlements, mainly by water, would have been intermittent. Families lived in wooden framed huts covered in thatch, sharing their accommodation with their few animals. Vermin were everywhere. Picking lice from one's family or friends was a sociable occupation. In all probability infant mortality was high, the 'naturalness' of childbirth being offset by the likelihood of disease. Life expectancy would also have been short. Old people were respected and regarded as wise just because there were so few of them and only the fittest survived to old age. The world beyond the village was a fearsome place. In the forest there were still wolves and the village often built a protective fence to keep out adventurous neighbours who saw survival in a bad year as most easily sustained by raiding from nearby settlements.

Next though we need to investigate how the Saxons got to this area and their political and religious history insofar as it affected Uttoxeter. Although we talk of the Saxons,

they were just one of a group of tribes or peoples who came to this island after the Romans had left. There were Jutes, Angles and Frisians as well as Saxons. They did so because of pressure from Teutonic tribes from the East. Peoples such as the Huns and Vandals were moving westwards into and across Europe. Those sea-faring folk who lived on the western side of Europe were almost pushed across to Britain. As far as Staffordshire was concerned, Saxon peoples came up the Humber, Ouse and Trent rivers to find suitable areas for settlement. Exact dates are difficult. We know that southern England was predominantly Saxon by the early sixth century and that the first fighting between different kingdoms occurred in the mid-sixth century. So we may assume that Uttoxeter was probably first settled sometime before 600 A.D.

It was part of the kingdom of Mercia. Originally Mercia was only a part of Northumbria but by about 650 A.D. had developed into a separate kingdom under Penda (626–655). During the course of the next two hundred years it was to vie with Northumbria and Wessex for primacy among the Kingdoms of the land. Its greatest ruler was Offa, King from 757 to 796 A.D. His headquarters were at Tamworth and he was known in Europe as a great leader. His protective dyke along the Welsh border remains as a reminder of the scale of his thought and power. For a short period during his reign Lichfield even became an archbishopric. But his successor Ethelbald was defeated at Burford and in 827 A.D. Mercia became an under kingdom to that of Egbert of Wessex.

For the inhabitants of the small settlement of Uttoxeter one of the biggest changes in their lives came about as a result of a new religious policy of the 660's. Christianity was introduced into the land of Mercia with the approval of the king. This did not happen, though, without a struggle. The traditional story of the triumph of Christianity is delightful if not to be believed wholly. St. Chad began to preach Christianity in Mercia and founded a college of canons at Stone. The two sons of Wulfhere the king were led by a white hart to Chad's cell and converted. The father was enraged and although the boys fled, they were slain, Wulphad at Stone and Rufinus at Burston. Wulfhere was then led by the same hart to Chad's cell. He repented of his crime and was converted, establishing the church of Christ in his lands and the college at Stone. His brother and successor, Ethelred went on to establish a nunnery at Trentham, of which the first abbess was Werburgh, Wulfhere's daughter. (4)

Modern accounts are more prosaic. They tell us that Christianity had been opposed by King Penda, hence its slow introduction. In the 660's A.D. Wilfrid was evangelising in Mercia at the request of Wulfhere. Incidentally he had only one son called Coinred. However, in 669, Archbishop Theodore moved Wilfrid to York, having deposed Chad as Bishop because of irregularities in his consecration. Chad was a disciple of St. Aidan and was sent to Mercia as bishop. For three years he worked there until struck down by disease in 672. Chad is commonly accepted as the first Bishop of Mercia because he accepted the authority of Theodore. (5) The church in the area was probably very rudimentary. For a start Chad's diocese was enormous. It was later divided into the dioceses of Lichfield, Hereford, Worcester, Leicester and Lindsey (Lincoln). Churches were few for they were usually built by lords of the manor. In the eleventh century when the Domesday Book was compiled only eleven parishes in the county are mentioned as having churches. While this is no accurate guide to the figure four hundred years before, it is unlikely that there were many churches in Staffordshire. How then was Christianity spread? Surely it was by itinerant clerics preaching at stone crosses in the open air in each village. Why build a church if there was no resident priest?

In the ninth century, less than one hundred years after the glory of Offa's reign, the Saxon domination was to end. Over the sea from Scandinavia came more people who were being put under pressure to sail west - the Danes. They were not Viking raiders, but settlers from Scandinavia with a way of life very similar to the Saxons they subjected. They arrived between 872 and 875 A.D. and set up their headquarters at Repton, a few miles to the east of Uttoxeter. King Alfred of Wessex managed to stop their advance. The resulting Treaty of Wedmore of 878 divided England into two parts and the dividing line was the Roman road Watling Street. To the north and east of it was the Danelaw while Alfred ruled to the south and west. Thus Uttoxeter was just in the Danish sphere of influence. But the settlement did not last and there was renewed fighting in the early tenth and eleventh centuries along this boundary line. So Uttoxeter would have been near to, if not involved in, fighting between the Danes and the resurgent Saxons. In 910 Edward the Elder began to push back the Danes after beating them in battle at Tettenhall. His sister Ethelfleda, widow of the Earl of Mercia, set about consolidating this victory. She built strongholds just inside Danish territory as bases for a reconquest of the surrounding land. They were at Tamworth, Stafford and Edderbury. By the time of her death in 918, Edward the Elder was acknowledged as king over much of the Danelaw and he began re-dividing the land into shires. They were named after their principal towns, hence Staffordshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Power was consolidated under his successor Athelstan.

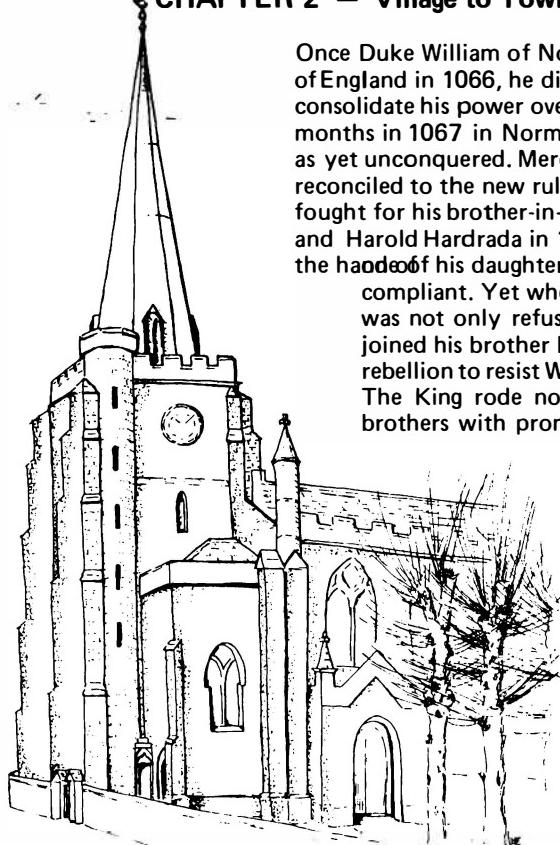
Society was not static though and in 980 there were fresh Danish invasions. In 1013 it was the turn of Sweyn of Denmark to invade. The Earl of Mercia refused to fight him and as a result his land, including Staffordshire, was attacked by the Saxon king, Edmund Ironside. In the following three years there was confusion in the area. The result of this confusion was that in 1016 both Edmund and Canute of Denmark ravaged this Mercian land. After that there was a certain limited stability under Earls Leofwine, Leofric, Alfgar and Edwin. But all this was disturbed mightily by the unexpected and opportunist invasion of southern England in 1066 by Duke William of Normandy which turned into a conquest of lasting significance.

How would the inhabitants of the village of Uttoxeter have been affected by all this political activity? Probably in an adverse way. Invasions might have meant calls on the men to fight. More probably troops on the move in the area would have commandeered food supplies. In a village society whose survival was dependent on reasonable harvests, the depredations of invading armies were like a bad harvest but writ large. It is hard to see any advantages to this small village of political events which may read so interestingly in our history books of today.

#### NOTES:

- (1) Victoria County History of Staffordshire. Vol. 1 ed. W. Page (1908) p.26-30
- (2) M.W. Greenslade and D.G. Stuart: A History of Staffordshire (1965) p.10
- (3) W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern. Part 1 (n.d.) p.26
- (4) Rev. W.S. Hutchinson: The Archdeaconry of Stoke-on-Trent (1893) p.1-2
- (5) V.C.H. Vol. 3 ed. M.W. Greenslade (1970) p.2-3

## CHAPTER 2 — Village to Town (1066–1266)



*St. Mary's Church*

only mentioned by one chronicler, Ordericus, but the devastation seems to have included Staffordshire, which would tend to verify the chronicler's tale. (1) Anyway, the estates of Edwin were confiscated and so Uttoxeter along with seven other lordships in Staffordshire and lands in Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Warwickshire and Leicestershire became the King's property. He then passed them on to the Ferrers family but seems to have retained them at the time of the Domesday Book.

The Domesday Book deserves a place of honour and serious study in any local history. We are indebted for it to William's tidy mind. He wanted to have a complete picture of his new land and see who owned what. He also wanted to be able to make more complete tax demands. For both these reasons he needed a record of each manor, its ownership, agriculture and value. The survey to achieve this record was carried out in the first seven months of 1086 by groups of commissioners for different counties. The book survives and is an invaluable source for almost all the country. Not only can we find out about scores of individual manors but we can make statistical surveys of hundreds of counties and make important comparisons about the different areas of England.

Once Duke William of Normandy had seized the throne of England in 1066, he did not set out at once to consolidate his power over all the country but spent nine months in 1067 in Normandy. The north and west were as yet unconquered. Mercia was, however, seemingly reconciled to the new ruler. Although Earl Edwin had fought for his brother-in-law King Harold against Tostig and Harold Hardrada in 1066, William had promised him the *haðeoð* his daughters in marriage. Edwin was suitably compliant. Yet when he asked for his reward Edwin was not only refused but insulted. He therefore joined his brother Morcar, Earl of Northumbria, in a rebellion to resist William north of the river Humber. The King rode north rapidly and pacified the brothers with promises. This was in 1068. It was during this northern drive that the Midland counties became part of William I's kingdom. Yet further north there was still trouble and in 1069 the king came to settle this part of his land once and for all. The lands of Earls Edwin and Morcar were devastated. People and property were systematically destroyed so that the area should never again be a problem to him. Staffordshire appears to have risen with the north in 1069, probably in September or October. This is

The entries were made in Latin in a kind of shorthand. They take the form of answers to specific questions asked of every manor. Who used to own the manor and who does now? How much land is being cultivated? How much of this is the Lord's demesne? Who lives there and of what social class? (This, of course, only referred to working men, we have to estimate family size). How much woodland, forest and meadow is there? Are there mills or a church? How much was the manor worth in the reign of Edward the Confessor and how much now? The commissioners did not get full answers to every question in every parish and their methods of recording data were different in different counties. Yet the entries are remarkably full and give us a fascinating look at eleventh century agricultural society.

The entry for Uttoxeter is as follows: Wotocheshede is held by the King. It used to be held by Earl Algar. It has half a hide of land. The arable land is 10 carucates, with 2 in demesne, (this can also be translated as: there is land for 10 ploughs with two ploughs in demesne) and one servant (or serf); 24 villeins, 11 bordars with 11 carucates (or ploughs). There are also 16 acres of meadow land, and a wood 2 miles long and broad (or 2 leagues in length and just as much in breadth). It was worth £7 in the time of Edward the Confessor; it is now worth £8. This is not an easy entry to interpret and Staffordshire is itself one of the more problematic counties. So let us begin by looking at this entry in detail and then going on to discuss general points about Uttoxeter in relation to the county, and Staffordshire as part of the national pattern. In the first place, the entry confirms that the King had confiscated the manor from the Earls of Mercia while, perhaps to bypass any questions of his legitimacy to reign, the previous holder is given as Algar (or Alfgar) and not Edwin, who had rebelled against William I. A hide was usually reckoned as 120 acres of land - that which could be worked by one plough team. It seems odd to talk of Uttoxeter having only half a hide of land when later it speaks of eleven plough teams and we know that the manor was probably over 8000 acres in total area. The answer must be that in Staffordshire the commissioners used the hide as a fiscal unit. It did not measure land but tax liability. This would then make sense of the next part of the entry.

The carucate was a measure of arable land. It meant the same as a hide - what one plough team could work in a year. Yet the term is here used so as to distinguish it from the unit of taxation. Interesting here is also the fact that one-sixth of the manor was demesne land. As only one servant or serf is mentioned, this would imply quite a degree of service on the demesne land by the villeins and bordars. The serf was probably little more than a slave, owning no land and being bound completely to his master. The villeins and bordars on the other hand did have some land of their own to work. The villein usually had a virgate, which was about 20 acres. The bordar had less, perhaps half as much. It says that they had eleven ploughs or carucates. This would mean just over one plough team for each hide or carucate of land. A plough team was usually of eight oxen. None of the villeins would have owned a whole team. They would probably have had from two to four oxen each.

The meadow land was important for hay making and the grazing of animals later in the year. It was left undisturbed and was not part of the simple crop rotation used elsewhere. The wood seems to have been quite extensive and it has been estimated as being 5760 acres. This was probably what later became the Uttoxeter ward of the Needwood forest. As to the value of the manor, it may not seem much by today's standards but it was four times the average value of a manor in Staffordshire. (2)

What then of Uttoxeter in relation to the rest of the county? Firstly, we must come back to the general picture of the county. Domesday confirms that it was heavily forested and Uttoxeter was no exception to this with 5760 acres out of about 8000 acres. 468,004 acres were noted in Domesday for Staffordshire and of these 319,538 were woodland. That is some 68%. The Bishop of Lichfield owned over 100,000 acres of forest while King William I had 63,360 acres. (3) It follows that Staffordshire could not have been a heavily populated or intensely farmed area. Uttoxeter must therefore be seen as one of the more prosperous parts with its eleven plough teams.

Staffordshire was and is divided into five hundreds. Uttoxeter is part of the Totmanslow hundred. This was the poorest of the five. The average value of manors in the Totmanslow hundred as recorded in Domesday was only £1 : 19 (£1-3s-10d). This figure is incomplete and so must be treated with caution but even if the figures were complete, Uttoxeter would appear as rich with a value of £8. The total value of the county was only £516 : 81 (£516-16s-3d). The number of men mentioned also makes Uttoxeter one of the largest villages in the county. There are 341 places mentioned in the survey and of these only 16 had over 30 inhabitants mentioned while only 8 had over 40. (4) Thus even before it was to become a town, Uttoxeter was a substantial village of some value in a poor area of the county. The total recorded population of the county was only about 3000 and the density appears to have been about one person for every two square miles in the north-east.

The social composition of the population is also interesting. Uttoxeter makes no mention of freemen or a priest. But the proportion of villeins, bordars and serfs accords well with the county averages. That is 59.1% villeins, 30.9% bordars and 8% serfs. There were only 36 freemen and 28 priests recorded in the whole county. So although we may characterise Uttoxeter as a thriving village, we should not make the mistake of thinking of it as anything other than servile. The inhabitants had good land to farm but no real freedom in their lives.

What though of Staffordshire in relation to the rest of the country? The general conclusions are the same in all the major analyses: a high proportion of villages that are referred to as waste (probably villages on marginal land that were deserted after the devastation of 1069-70), a low standard of prosperity, some notable omissions in the data and a particular problem with the plough teams and plough lands (the former tending to outnumber the latter).

In fact the Domesday for the county was very short, only Middlesex and Rutland being briefer. Not only were there few priests but there were very few churches mentioned either. This may be because Domesday was essentially a landholding survey and so if a church had no glebe land attached, it was of no interest to the commissioners. Also there was no information about pasture or the animals kept in different manors. However, it is by comparisons with other counties that we can see the real poverty of Staffordshire. The following table makes this clear :

County	Settlements	Plough teams	Rural population
Gloucestershire	363	3812	8083
Herefordshire	312	2421	4453
Leicestershire	294	1855	6399
Northamptonshire	324	2253	6872
Staffordshire	341	976	2866 (5)

Mills are another good way of estimating prosperity. Here we can make a comparison with Dorset, which was a county of 120,000 fewer acres: (6)

County	Mills	Highest Value	Collective Revenue
Staffordshire	64	£0.67 (13s-4d)	£516.81 ( £516-16s-3d)
Dorset	272	£1.25 (25s.)	£3359.64 (£3359-12s-9d)

Domesday is an important source for Uttoxeter's history. Interesting for the subsequent development of the village was the fact that one of the commissioners for the county was Henry de Ferrers (or Ferrars) into whose hands William I had already given the lands of the honour of Tutbury including Uttoxeter. Unfortunately he died only two years after William I, in 1089, and was succeeded by his only surviving son, Robert. The new lord of the honour of Tutbury is an important figure in Uttoxeter's past. He lived until 1139 and appears to have been made Earl of Derby by King Stephen after the battle of the Standard of 1138. This was fought near Northallerton and was to repulse the invasion of David, King of Scotland.

As far as Uttoxeter was concerned, Robert worked to improve the agriculture and trade of the area. This was to his own advantage. He could expect enhanced revenues if trade and production in his manors were increased. Uttoxeter, Tutbury and Newborough became small trading centres, hardly as yet towns. Although not as yet chartered, Uttoxeter became free of tolls, tonnage and other duties on trade. What greater stimulus to trade could there be than a duty free trading centre? Also, although Needwood was now a royal forest and so directly under the forest laws of the King, the Uttoxeter ward had some restrictions lifted. (It may have been that Needwood was really a chase and not a forest and this would mean that it was really just unenclosed land where animals could roam freely). Wood could be cut for fuel and building and some pasturing of animals was allowed. The town prospered and a record of the early twelfth century says that there were 182 burgesses in Tutbury, 127 in Uttoxeter and 101 in Newborough. (7)

Robert died in 1139 to be succeeded by his second son, also called Robert, who lived until 1162. Nothing is known of his life save that his son William succeeded him. The new earl led a far from peaceful life. He added to his estates by marrying Margaret Peveril and joined with the sons of Henry II in rebellion against their ageing father. The approach of the King to Tutbury caused William to have second thoughts and he submitted. He seems, however, to have retained his affection for Henry's son Richard I, for he joined him on the third Crusade to the Holy Land. That was to be his last great adventure, for he died at the siege of Acre in 1190. He left his estates to his son, a second William. This lord lived until 1247 and played a more peaceful role in national politics. He was a loyal supporter of King John and was made Earl of Derby by him in 1200 (or possibly 1204). This is odd for his great-grandfather is supposed to have been given the same earldom in 1138. There is no way that these contradictory facts can be reconciled except by speculation. It could have been that William was confirmed in his title by King John or that the earlier creation was for some reason held to be invalid. We shall probably never know the truth. This Earl of Derby, William, also consolidated his power locally. The leading landowner at the time was Ranulf, Earl of Chester. He built Chartley Castle and was the boon companion of the Earl of Derby. Their friendship was sealed when William married Ranulf's sister. It was because of this that the Ferrers family acquired Chartley Castle in 1232 on Ranulf's death. The two had served King John till the end, both being present at his death at

Newark in 1216 and witnessing his will. During the minority of the new king, Henry III, William Ferrers continued to serve the throne. When the barons rose against the young king, Ferrers acted as the arbitrator.

On his death in 1247 he was succeeded by another William. He only held the land and title for seven years but in that time secured a charter for Uttoxeter. This was like many another charter granted at the time and may be read in full in Redfern's History of Uttoxeter or Sir Oswald Moseley's History of Tutbury. (8) It was dated August 15th 1252. It said that burgesses of the town would be free if they paid 5p. (12d.) each twice a year for their burgages. They also had the right to take in new chapmen and other freemen. No one else was to carry on trading without "reasonable and accustomed toll." But the burgesses were free to trade without toll in the honour of Tutbury except where other charters were involved. If the king taxed the boroughs, then two burgesses of Uttoxeter would do it for the town. The profits on the markets and ovens were retained by William Ferrers as lord of the manor. He also kept ownership of the site of the borough's market, control of the court-leet (the petty sessions of their day) and his right of pannage outside the borough (i.e. the right to pasture pigs in forest land). However, the citizens had the right to common and herbage in the Uttoxeter ward of the forest (i.e. the right to pasture on special open land). Provision was also made for maintaining the revenue from the town. If a burgage was unoccupied for a year and lacked a tenant, then all the burgages of the street had to take the burden upon themselves. This not only kept up revenue but encouraged the citizens of the town to maintain their status.

Before this charter was granted, William Ferrers had to sort out his rights and obligations with the king, Henry III. This was done in a charter of December 14th, 1251. (9) By this Ferrers was to have free warren in the manor, so long as the lands involved were not within the bounds of the forest and the King's rights were not infringed. There was to be a weekly market on Wednesdays and one fair each year from September 7th-9th, the feast of the Nativity of the Virgin Mary.

It was only two years after the town was granted its charter that William met an untimely end. He had gout and could not ride a horse. As a result he had to be carried everywhere in a litter. When this carriage was upset he was so injured by his fall that he died. He was succeeded by his young son Robert, yet to come of age. He was the last of the Ferrers family to hold the honour of Tutbury. He ruined his family's future and position by rebelling against his king along with Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester.

Robert had been married to the King's niece, Mary of Angoulême, at the age of eight and was a widower before he reached manhood. Perhaps it was this close relationship with his family that made Henry III alternately excuse Robert for his rebellion and then treat him harshly. In 1264 Robert, Earl of Derby is to be found with the Earl of Leicester at the battle of Lewes where both the King and his eldest son, Prince Edward were captured. After this de Montfort appointed Ralph Bassett of Drayton as "Custos Pacis" for Staffordshire. This well nigh despotic ruler was Robert Ferrers' father-in-law. In 1265 Robert was present at the battle of Evesham where all the hopes of the barons were laid to rest in a major defeat. He was taken prisoner and as a result was brought to account for his rebellion. He was put on trial on October 23rd, 1265 for high crimes and misdemeanours. He confessed and pleaded for mercy. He presented Henry III with a jewelled gold cup and 1500 marks. He was set free on the understanding that his inheritance would be forfeit if he rebelled again.

This made no difference to the headstrong young earl. He immediately raised a force of men and took Chesterfield, only to be routed by the King's forces on May 24th, 1266. He sought refuge in a church, hidden under bags of wool. He was seen by a young girl whose man had been forced to join the Ferrers army and had been killed. She betrayed him. He was taken thence to London and attainted for his treason. His lands were confiscated and, by two grants of June 26th and August 5th, given to Henry III's second son Edmund. Thus the lands, including Uttoxeter, passed from the Ferrers family into the Earldom of Lancaster.

Robert Ferrers was in prison for three years and then spent years trying to recover his estates. The crown offered him his lands back if he could find a £50,000 fine in a short time after his release, to be paid to Edmund. Of course this was impossible but Robert did not give up. Eventually, in the early years of the reign of Edward I, his son John got back Chartley Castle becoming Baron Ferrers of Chartley. But the honour of Tutbury remained securely in royal hands.

It is hard to know how much all this would have affected Uttoxeter. It may have been called on to provision manoeuvring armies and it may have been touched by Prince Edward's advance against Tutbury. But it was undoubtedly a growing and prosperous place. Its rights were secured and its position as a small market town for the local community established by the time it fell under new control after 1266.

#### NOTES:

- (1) Rev. R.W. Eytون: Domesday Studies, Staffordshire (1881) p.30
- (2) The Staffordshire Domesday has been extensively and authoritatively analysed in the following: Rev. R.W. Eytون: Domesday Studies, Staffordshire, V.C.H. vol.IV ed. L.M. Midgley (1958), The Domesday Geography of Midland England ed. H.C. Darby and I.R. Terrett (2nd ed. 1971) and V.C.H. vol. VI ed. M.W. Greenslade and D.A. Johnson (1979).
- (3) Memorials of Old Staffordshire ed. Rev. W. Beresford (n.d.) p.43
- (4) V.C.H. vol. IV p.12, 20
- (5) Darby and Terrett: Domesday Geography p.454
- (6) Eytون: Domesday Studies p.23
- (7) F. Redfern: A History of Uttoxeter (2nd ed. 1881) p.95 quoting the Harleian MSS.
- (8) Redfern (1st ed. 1865) p.50-2 and Sir O. Moseley: History of the Castle, Priory and Town of Tutbury (1832)
- (9) W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern, part II (n.d.) p.42 quoting Chancery Charter Roll, 36 H III, 14 Dec. 1251.

## CHAPTER 3 .— The Lords of Lancaster (1266–1485)

When Edmund, Earl of Lancaster took over the property of Robert Ferrers, Earl of Derby, including Uttoxeter, it was at a time of great economic expansion. Although Domesday had recorded 65 manors lying waste in Staffordshire, the position was soon reversed and by the early twelfth century things were looking up economically. By 1266 the lands of the Ferrers family were worth a great deal more than when they had been given them. The available surveys of estates in the county all suggest a four or five fold increase in production between 1100 and 1320. (1) There was also a rise in population and the demand for food increased so much that new land was brought into cultivation. This was often common pasture or waste land. It also included forest land that was really the property of the King. This putting into cultivation of land was called assarting and helps to explain the situation in Uttoxeter. It would appear that the town had three large open fields for strip cultivation yet by 1414, when a survey of Lancastrian lands was made, individuals also owned separate fields. The three main fields have been identified as Botham Field, Bromshulfe Field and Maiden Field. (2) For the people of Uttoxeter land was a necessary part of their living. The towns—people could not as yet survive as tradesmen alone. They had to have the means of growing their own food to survive. Farming could also produce surpluses which could be sold, thus providing the necessary capital for trading.

Yet the practice of agriculture did not change over the period. Farming was still mixed, with animal husbandry and arable crops of equal importance. The forest ward of Uttoxeter would have added an extra dimension. There were rights of pasture which would have increased the potential for animal husbandry. Also there were the gathering of nuts, the killing of some small birds and the use of fallen timber and bark. With the large, open fields and the small, enclosed assarts, there would have been many disputes over rights and responsibilities. A particular case of 1400 shows how acrimonious such disputes could become. Walter Ashleade accused Henry Pershey of Uttoxeter of breaking into his close (an enclosed field) at Uttoxeter and taking a horse and six cows worth 100 shillings (£5). He also said that he cut down some trees, dug up the land and took soil and trees worth £10. Just to finish things off Pershey was accused of allowing in his cattle so that corn and grass to the value of 10 marks (£6:33) were trodden down and consumed. (3) In the plea rolls we are given no indication as to why this assault on Ashleade's property was made but it seems to show that however static mediaeval agricultural society may have been it was not always stable.

The lord's farmed land or demesne was often rented out during the early years of this economic growth (c.1120-1250) but the rise in agricultural prices of the late thirteenth century made many lords revert to farming their own land. All this was to change in the early fourteenth century. 1310 to 1350 were years of profound crisis in Europe.

The population of Europe had grown, up to the early fourteenth century. New land had been taken into cultivation to supply this increased demand for food yet no important new agricultural techniques were introduced to increase production. So the only way of meeting the demand had to be by assarting. This new land was often marginal, in other words it was not of good quality and soon lost its fertility. So food production could not meet the needs of the people. In mediaeval farming the line between success and failure was drawn by the weather. A bad harvest could mean a reduction in production of up to half. Poor harvests combined with declining fertility or marginal land and the ever-increasing demands of a rising population meant just one thing—disaster.

That occurred in the European wide famine of 1315-17 when untold thousands died because of the inadequacies of their farming methods. Even the area around Uttoxeter was affected because the famine is mentioned in the chronicle of Croxden Abbey. Assarting went on in a desperate bid to produce more food. Between 1314 and 1322, 150 acres were taken in at Uttoxeter. Yet some landowners were finding it hard to survive, probably if they had marginal land. In 1313-14 over 600 acres in Uttoxeter and Marchington were uncultivated or had had their rent reduced by 2d or 4d an acre. (4)

Just at the time when you might have expected this depression to lift, a new disaster occurred. This was the Black Death. It arrived from the east by ship in southern England and spread rapidly, reaching Staffordshire in the spring and summer of 1349. At the time (and for over 500 years afterwards) no one knew how the disease, a mixture of pneumonic and bubonic plague was caused. Some people died after being ill for a few days with black swellings in their armpits and groin while others dropped dead after a day or two with an apparent chest complaint. This was because of the two forms of the disease. The more well known and lingering form was bubonic plague, being distinguished by the black swellings. The quicker death came from pneumonic plague where the infection went straight to the lungs and never manifested itself in buboes. The Black Death spread as quickly and disastrously as it did because it was often pneumonic plague and the people had no resistance to either form of the disease. When the disease (almost always bubonic plague) returned at regular intervals from the mid-fourteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries, the death toll was always lower than in the original outbreak. The people were developing an immunity. But they could not eradicate the disease easily. Carried as it was in the stomachs of fleas, it was necessary to eliminate the insect carrier. The fleas normally lived on black rats and they liked to live in the inviting wattle and daub walls and thatched roofs of houses built at the time. Only when brick began to be used for walls and tiles for the roof, and the brown rat ousted the black, could the ordinary people hope to be free of the disease.

What though were the effects of the original outbreak in 1349, which may have killed anything up to 20% or 30% of the population? Agricultural production slumped with a fall in demand and the supply of labour. Labourers' wages increased because of the scarcity of men. A thatcher used to earn 1d a day in the early 1300's but by 1360 could expect to get 3½d to 4d a day. By the latter date even unskilled labour could expect to earn up to 4d a day. Landlords were badly hit. Farms were abandoned and remained empty unless the land was very good. Even then tenants could hold out for low rents because of the scarcity of farmers. Towns like Uttoxeter were badly hit too. Their market would have got smaller and so would their tolls. Labour was short to help farm their small landholdings which, because the townspeople also ran shops, was sorely needed. The man with sons could survive while the man who had to hire labour was worse off.

We think nowadays of rented land in terms of acres or hectares but only the more recently assarted land or demesne land were rented by the acre. More often traditional lands were held by custom. While annual money rents were paid, the fee on entering into the holding was often of more account to the landowner. The land was held for so many lives and each successive generation had to pay an entry fine. After the Black Death entry fines were much lower to encourage repair and care of the property. You can see how the depression following the Black Death lasted through the rest of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries by looking at the value of the corn mills of Tutbury, Marchington, Uttoxeter and Barton in the records of the Duchy of Lancaster:

1400-1	£40		
1473	£30		
1475	£20+	(5)	

This economic depression of much of the later middle ages is probably in part responsible for the political and social unrest of the period. Between the Black Death and the accession of the first Tudor, Henry VII, in 1485, we only have to think of the Peasants' Revolt, the deposition of Richard II, the rise of the Lollards, the risings of Glendower and Hotspur, the rebellion of Jack Cade and the seemingly endless Wars of the Roses to see that here was a society in turmoil. Uttoxeter had its own share in this unrest in the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V, with the reckless lawlessness of the gang which included three brothers of the Mynors family.

The Mynors family history can be traced back to the time of King John when Stephen Mynors was granted land in Barton-under-Needwood by Robert Ferrers. The family prospered and became servants of the Earls of Lancaster in the fourteenth century. In 1306 John Mynors is the first recorded master forester. He is also recorded as steward of Tutbury in 1322. Towards the end of the century the family split into two branches based on Blackenhall and Uttoxeter. The head of the latter was another John Mynors. Late in life he became a pillar of respectability, as we shall see, but he showed little affection for the Duke of Lancaster who became King Henry IV. Henry had successfully deposed Richard II in 1399 and so Uttoxeter became crown land. But not all the country were happy with this usurpation. In Wales Owen Glendower rose in revolt while in the north Harry 'Hotspur' Percy was the leader. In 1407 the Earl of Northumberland came south aided by disaffected northerners. The rebellion proper was soon ended when the Earl was slain but it continued in Staffordshire. The leaders were Hugh de Erdeswick and Thomas de Synnerton.

First the steward and constable at Newcastle-under-Lyme, John Blount was attacked. Out of fear the Mayor of the town did not press charges. This emboldened Erdeswick to make another attack on Blount, this time at Lichfield. The chief steward replied by issuing a writ against the rebel leader. This had no effect at all. Erdeswick was joined by John Mynors and his two younger brothers William and Thomas in an orgy of destruction and assault. They maimed John Caldwell of Rolleston and beat Robert Hawk of Dunstall. On October 12th, they were at Newcastle-under-Lyme and attacked the house of John Boughay. He had had the audacity to bring their conduct before the local court. He was forced to hide in the church. Two officials of the 'Chase of Needwood' were the next to be attacked but they resisted stoutly. The Mynors brothers went to Marchington to attack Sir Nicholas Montgomery, constable of Tutbury Castle and Warden of Needwood Chase. Uttoxeter was the next destination of this gang. They destroyed the furniture in the house of John Passmere (or Passman), who had been a forester of the Duchy. Their anger was then vented on the miller at Uttoxeter whose life was threatened if he were to remain in the town. Finally, an attempt was made to kill Thomas de Belton, a Duchy tenant. (6) The Mynors were probably also involved in the murder of John Attewood, a tax collector in Uttoxeter, and of a man at Loxley.

This mayhem ended with Erdeswick's arrest but the story was not yet finished. The Mynors came to Rocester to rescue their leader and challenged John Blount to fight Erdeswick or engage six, twelve or twenty men for a challenge. They said that they would go to Barton Park and destroy his mother's house if he did not agree.

Parliament finally ordered the arrest of John Mynors in 1410. In 1411 he surrendered and was pardoned. Yet later in the same year he was involved in a killing at Wolverhampton and had to be pardoned again on May 20th, 1412. In 1413 he was sued for giving liveries (i.e. giving his followers a distinctive uniform) and was ordered to be arrested in the following year. On January 1st, 1415 he was pardoned yet again!

What was going on? It might appear that John Mynors had it in for the Duchy of Lancaster but that cannot be so. He was bailiff of Tutbury in 1408 and is referred to in 1414 as a King's servant. In 1419 he became M.P. for Newcastle and was successively a member for Staffordshire in 1420, Newcastle in 1422 and Staffordshire in 1431 and 1437. For these positions he would have been put in by the Steward of the Duchy! In 1413 he is referred to as a bailiff and by 1425 was of such respectability that he was in the commission to arrest Thomas Fitzherbert. In 1433 he is referred to as esquire in the Staffordshire list of gentry, while in 1437 he was in the commission to manage Alcester Abbey. (7)

John Mynors was also not slow to expand his own landholding and power. In 1420-1 there was a case involving John and his son, together with William Mynors, Nicholas Bradley (Vicar of Uttoxeter) and Robert Hert (a chaplain). This group of men were trying to secure land that used to belong to William Hunt and had passed to his daughter Margery. For 200 marks (£133) they acquired from her a messuage (a house and its land), 15 tofts (or homesteads), 100 acres of land, 80 acres of meadow, 140 acres of pasture and some land in Derbyshire. She granted the tenements (or rights to be tenants) to this group of men and their heirs. A similar case is recorded in 1429-30. This time it was just John, his son and William Mynors involved. For 300 marks in silver (£200) Arthur Curteys remitted all his rights to 20 messuages, 100 acres of land, 80 acres of meadow and 140 acres of pasture. (8)

Perhaps the career of John Mynors, even if we cannot understand it fully, tells us some useful things about the society of his time. Coming from a gentry background he was more pardonable than a peasant leader. He was wealthy enough to take advantage of the economic misfortune of others. His life illustrates the problems caused by the instability of the time and the weakness of central, royal government in the face of determined aggression that did not actually threaten to upset the social balance.

To tell the story of John Mynors we have missed out important events from the history of Uttoxeter. Not the least of these was the effect on the honour of Tutbury of their new landowner the Earl of Lancaster, and his successors. Edmund, the first Earl, claimed the same privileges as his predecessor and so the life of the town would have carried on without interruption. He did not do much with his new lands despite being in possession of them for just over thirty years. He died in 1297 at the siege of Bayonne, in France. His second wife, Blanche had borne him three sons and a daughter and Thomas, the eldest, became the second Earl. He was important for the area because he restored Tutbury Castle and made it a home. The castle had been destroyed by Thomas's uncle Edward I. In 1308 he had the charter of Uttoxeter confirmed. This charter really gave legal force to the transfer of ownership of the lordship of the manor to the Earls of Lancaster. It was dated December 1st, 1308. The market was to be held weekly on Wednesdays, as previously. The town was also allowed a three day fair on the eve, feast and morrow of the Blessed Mary Magdalene (July 21st-23rd). This seems to have been either a change or a confusion. In the 1252 charter the fair had been set for the three days around the feast of the Nativity of the

Virgin Mary (September 7th-9th). It is hard to see any reason why there should be a change. It was probably a mistake arising from inefficient administration. Copying errors were to be found in manuscript books as well as in legal documents.

An indication of the second Earl's lavish style of life is to be found in the record of his domestic expenses. For 1313 they were £7449-13s-0½d. (£7449.65) (9) Expenditure on this scale must have benefited the immediate area in an era of poor communications. It is hard to see how a town like Uttoxeter could fail to benefit. But this golden age for the area, which lasted from 1297, was to end abruptly. The King, since 1307, had been Edward II. He had made himself unpopular with the nobility by the excessive favouritism shown to Piers Gaveston, whom some view as his homosexual partner. Gaveston was captured and executed in 1312 and Thomas, Earl of Lancaster played a part. This unpopularity was compounded by Edward's failure as a military leader. No mediaeval king could expect to lose a battle like Bannockburn in 1314 and not face opposition. The Earl of Lancaster was now the leader of that opposition. In 1315 he was made commander-in-chief against the Scots but he did nothing. Many moderates turned away from his leadership and Edward II tried to revive his authority with the help of the Despencers. This roused Thomas who now headed a revived opposition against the royal favourites. The Despencers were banished but the King recalled them and marched against his cousin and arch-opponent. Tutbury was the Earl's centre of defence and he held a crucial bridge over the river Trent at Burton. The river was high when Edward II arrived and it seemed unlikely that Tutbury could be threatened unless the King could take the bridge. The Earl was taken by surprise when the King crossed at a ford at Walton, took Burton and threatened Tutbury. He fled north. The King caught up with him at Boroughbridge and in the ensuing battle the Earl was captured. A speedy trial followed at Pontefract on March 21st, 1320. The sentence was that Thomas should be drawn, hung and beheaded. The King decided on beheading alone. The date of the execution is uncertain. It may have been in late March or possibly was delayed until May. Thomas was the greatest man in England after the King. He had immense landholdings and was an Earl five times over. This obviously accounts for his power and influence. Yet he was either a lazy or an indecisive man. Perhaps he could not bring himself, in the last resort, to topple the idea of kingship?

On his death Edward II took over his lands. The estates in Staffordshire were put into the hands of Roger Beier to administer. But this only lasted until 1324 when Thomas's brother Henry was restored to the Earldoms of Lancaster and Leicester. Edward II was himself nearing the end of his reign. He was toppled after an invasion in 1326 by his wife Isabella and her lover, Roger Mortimer. The King was forced to abdicate in favour of his teenage son Edward III and was then murdered in Berkeley Castle. By 1330 Edward was tired of the domination of the land by his mother and Mortimer. In alliance with Henry of Lancaster, he came to full power. The third Earl of Lancaster had by now gone blind but he managed to help the young king. As a result of this disability Henry retired from active life in national politics and devoted the rest of his life to charitable work and religious devotion until his death in 1345.

He was succeeded by his only son, Henry, who lived until 1361. He died of the plague. In 1351 he was made Duke of Lancaster, the first non-royal Duke to be created since the Norman conquest. He had no sons and so his great territorial holdings had to be divided between his two daughters, Maud and Blanche. Maud married Lord Stafford and Blanche married Edward III's fourth son, John of Gaunt. He was

made Duke of Lancaster. The lands that belonged to the Earldom of Derby and the Dukedom of Lancaster were Blanche's part of the inheritance. John of Gaunt was an important man in the realm but not an influential one. His father still kept a tight rein on power. By Blanche, John had two daughters and a son before she died in the plague epidemic of September 1369. The two young girls were put in the charge of Catherine Swynford.

During the 1370's John of Gaunt increased his power. His ageing father became besotted with Alice Perrers. The heir, the Black Prince, was dying while Lionel of Clarence died. John's improved status is seen by his second wife, Constance of Castile. Through her he would in time claim the throne of Castile. In 1374 Constance came to live at Tutbury Castle. The magnificence of the early years of the century seemed to have returned. The Duchess lived a life of great magnificence and, naturally, the area around benefited. Trade was stimulated. When Edward III died in 1377, to be succeeded by his grandson Richard II, John of Gaunt reached the apogee of his power. Along with his brother Cambridge he was made protector of the boy. Unfortunately Tutbury and the area around had to suffer by his long absences.

John of Gaunt was not popular and during the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 his London home, Savoy Palace, was sacked by the mob. In 1390 Constance died and the Duke married his children's keeper Catherine Swynford. At the same time he was trying hard to secure his claim to the Castilian throne and Tutbury became merely one of the Duke's estates. The young Richard II was afraid of his uncle's power and on his death in 1399, seized his estates after banishing the son and heir, Henry.

But Henry returned and usurped the throne in the same year. He became Henry IV and Uttoxeter became royal property again as it had been over three hundred years before. Although Uttoxeter in particular and Staffordshire generally were to be loyally Lancastrian during the Wars of the Roses, Edward IV, a Yorkist King, did not seem to have any trouble in getting effective control of the honour of Tutbury after 1461. He granted it to his brother George of Clarence and when he rebelled it was entrusted to the Archbishop of Canterbury. In 1474 Edward IV resumed full control himself.

Although Uttoxeter went through all these changes in ownership, we have not yet tried to build up a picture of what this small town was like during the Lancastrian period of its history. The best information on the economic position of the town is to be found in the surveys of the Lancaster lands made in 1313, 1370 and 1415. The Subsidy Rolls of 1327 and 1332 which were made for tax purposes are useful for comparative information and the records of the Poll Tax of 1379-81 can help us to understand the composition of the population. The survey of 1313-14 records 145 burgages in Uttoxeter worth £9 in rent. The figure in the twelfth century mentioned in the previous chapter had been 127. If all the burgages had paid their dues fully, according to the town's charter, the revenue would have been £14-10s. in 1313. So although there was an increase in numbers, prosperity was not universal. A sign of the importance of the market may be seen in the 32½ stalls recorded in the survey and also from the tolls, which amounted to £14-13s-4d. (£14.67). To get some idea of values, we should compare this figure with the wage of a skilled man. A thatcher earned 1d a day, so we might estimate his yearly income as about 25s (£1.25). That being the case, the tolls of the market were equivalent to the wages of nearly twelve skilled men. Also the Lancaster estates received £4 a year for the common oven.

This was farmed out. All this suggests a small, prosperous market town, but no spectacular growth. (10)

The survey of 1370 reveals fewer burgages, 140 yielding a smaller rent, £7-2s (£7.10). This is not a significant decline bearing in mind the Black Death. It goes on to detail the rents from areas of land around the town and other perquisites, giving a total of £61-5s-5d (£61.27). Included in this figure is a rent of £5-6s-8d (£5.33) for the water mill on Hockley Brook. On the industrial side two forges are mentioned. But Uttoxeter was not as valuable to the Lords of Lancaster as other manors, because it retained so much for itself under its charter. For example Barton-under-Needwood yielded £72-3s-4d (£72.17) and Marchington £100-6s-11d (£100.35). Even the Uttoxeter ward of the Needwood forest was the least valuable of the five. (11)

The survey of 1414-5 reveals much the same picture but a more gentle decline. The number of burgages is down from 140 to 138 and the rent for the same from £7-2s (£7.10) to £6-17s-11d (£6.90). The forges are not mentioned this time. So Uttoxeter was going through an economic depression following the Black Death. As a small trading centre, the town was protected from the extreme effects, but it still gradually went downhill. The revival of the town would only come with a general upturn in the economy. The subsidy rolls help us to see how many wealthy families there were in the town and assess the relative prosperity of different communities. For Uttoxeter in the first subsidy roll of 1327, 27 people are mentioned and they appear to be from 21 families. They were to pay 63s. (£3.15). Separate assessments for Loxley and Crakemarsh totalled 44s-1d (£2.20). These figures compare with 80s. (£4) for Marchington, 118s-11d (£5.95) for Abbots Bromley and 220s. (£11) for Stafford. The figures for the second subsidy roll of 1332-3 are completely different. Abbots Bromley went down 10s while Stafford went up 48s. These and the reduction in Marchington's assessment to 47s-5d, may be accounted for by stricter or laxer scrutiny of the assessed but such variations are much greater in Uttoxeter. For this second assessment 32 names are on the roll and they seem to come from 30 families, yet the amount of the subsidy went up from 63s to 126s-2d (£6.31), just over double. Loxley and Crakemarsh were not included separately and so, with their addition to the Uttoxeter figures the increase becomes intelligible. All the same it is clear that Uttoxeter, even before the tragedy of 1349, was not an important town beyond its immediate environs. (12)

Although we do not have the Poll Tax returns of 1379-81 for the Totmanslow hundred, we do have those for Offlow and Cuttlestone. These suggest that 88% of all people were agricultural labourers or husbandmen while 12% were involved in trade and industry. This should help us to understand both why Uttoxeter was small and why it was important. The town was small because the demand for any products it might produce or sell was small. It was a great convenience to local villages as a market but people only came if they had something to sell - otherwise they had nothing with which to buy. So Uttoxeter was bound to remain small so long as agriculture failed to produce no more than modest surpluses for local farmers. Yet it was important because towns were scarce. If 88% of people worked on the land and transport over any long distance was laborious, small towns like Uttoxeter had to provide all that the labourer or husbandman could not provide for himself. Where else could he expect to get salt, manufactured cloth, pots and pans and any luxury items, except Uttoxeter?

From the above, life may appear to have been very earth-bound, but we must not

forget that the middle ages may well be viewed as an age of faith. It was a time when ordinary people's lives were enriched by the services, ceremonies and superstitions which went with the Christian faith. Not for the ordinary man or woman the intellectual Christianity of an Aquinas or the fraternal holiness of a Francis. Much more common would have been to see elaborate services read in a language the congregation could not understand, detailed ritual taking place behind wooden screens clear of the rude public gaze and a belief in the power of saints and their relics that far outweighed belief in the aspects of Christianity we accept today. Yet we should not decry the faith of these people. Did they not provide the labour and money to build some of the greatest edifices in Western Europe? Can we deny the faith of people who built Lincoln, Chartres and Milan cathedrals? Even in Uttoxeter we are reminded of this faith every time we visit the town. The tower and spire were the glory of the fourteenth century church and still survive today.

The first mention of a priest in Uttoxeter is 1252 when Thomas the Rector was a witness to the town's charter. We then have the names of rectors of the parish from the later thirteenth century (see Appendix A). The first mention of a church is in 1281. At that time the Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield was Roger Meuland or Longespee. He was a kinsman of King Henry III and had been appointed at the prompting of the Queen. He was an unscrupulous man and sought to have the church of Uttoxeter divided, in defiance of canon law. Fortunately for the town this was prohibited by Archbishop Peckham. Exactly why the Bishop should want to divide the church we do not know. The next time that the church is noticed in documents there are also problems to unravel. In February 1331 there was an argument in the town which came before Roger de Norbury, Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield. The dispute was between the vicar and the parson. The bishop's decision was that the vicar should have the vicarage, all belonging to it and the chief tithes. The parson got the tithe of flax combings from the Lord of the Manor's land and that of lambs' wool and the mills. He was to have all mortuaries and things belonging to the church not given to the vicar. The vicar had to provide all things necessary for the church, i.e. incense, bread and wine. (13) At first sight this looks like a dispute between a rector and his appointed vicar (for which read 'vicar' and 'parson' in the above). But it is not quite that simple. Although one associates chief tithes with the rector, the tithes given here to the 'parson' are not the tithes usually given to a vicar. Also the rector or 'vicar' is here given the vicarage so we may assume he was resident and could take services which makes the 'parson's' position harder to understand.

The church in which these men would have taken services was newly rebuilt. Unfortunately, we have to rely for information about it on old engravings and paintings because it was pulled down in the 1820's to make way for the present building. It was in the Decorated style. It had a long nave and two aisles with a tall chancel and a chapel on the south side. This became a chantry chapel and burial place for the Mynors family. They also had a private gallery with their own outside entrance. The church was built with a large, stone tower at the west end. This still stands today and may well have been the work of Roger de Yevele. Work on the road outside the tower in the present century revealed immense foundations approximately equal to its height. Roger de Yevele's son Henry went on to achieve great things as Edward III's chief mason. He supervised the building of Westminster Hall and important parts of Westminster Abbey and Canterbury Cathedral.

The value of the living was assessed at £12 in 1291. This was part of the general

valuation of church property which preceded a taxation by Pope Nicholas IV. King Edward I had been granted a tenth of clerical incomes by the Pope for six years for his Scottish wars, with the promise that he would go on a crusade. In 1341 a panel of local jurors sought to re-assess this valuation. Twelve of them found, for Uttoxeter, that the current value did not reach the old taxation. This was probably another sign of the economic decline which had set-in in the early fourteenth century. However, the livings had caught the eye of King Edward III. When he came to endow the Dean and Chapter of his new chapel of St. George at Windsor, he gave them Uttoxeter. Thus the rector became a corporate body not dissimilar from the growing number of monastic improprietors all over the country. It was probably an advantage to the town. Although the people had no control over who might become their vicar, it was unlikely that the rector would interfere with religious affairs in the town.

When the middle ages came to a close in the fifteenth century and the new Tudor dynasty were about to usurp the throne, Uttoxeter was a small, stable market town as it had successfully become over the previous 200 years.

#### NOTES:

- ( 1) The Audley estates (1308), Bishop of Coventry and Lichfield's estates (1298) and a survey of Needwood Forest (c.1300) - V.C.H. vol. VI ed. M.W. Greenslade and D.A. Johnson (1979) p.6-7.
- ( 2) W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern, part 1 (n.d.) p. 29.
- ( 3) Plea Rolls (1387-1405) Staffordshire Historical Collections XV (1894) p.93
- ( 4) V.C.H. vol. VI p.36
- ( 5) V.C.H. vol. VI p.42
- ( 6) Sir O. Moseley: History of Tutbury (1832) p. 123-5, based on the Parliamentary rolls of 1409.
- ( 7) Parliamentary History, vol. I S.H.C. (1917-18) p. 195-6 and R. Somerville: History of the Duchy of Lancaster vol. I (1953) p.548
- ( 8) Final Concords of Staffs. S.H.C. XI (1890) pp. 227, 230.
- ( 9) Moseley: Tutbury pp. 39-41.
- (10) V.C.H. vol. VI p. 8.
- (11) F. Redfern: History of Uttoxeter (1865) p. 61-2.
- (12) Subsidy Rolls of A.D. 1327 S.H.C. VII (1886) p.220 and Subsidy Roll of 1332-3 S.H.C. X (1889) p.113.
- (13) The Register of Roger de Norbury S.H.C. I (1880) p. 257.

## CHAPTER 4 — The Tudor Age (1485–1603)

With the triumph of Henry, Earl of Richmond at the battle of Bosworth in 1485, a new dynasty ascended the English throne. Because of the success of the Tudors and the greatness of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I, we tend to overlook the fact that the founder of the family's fortunes, Henry VII, was a usurper with no real claim to the throne except that of conquest. We also overlook the illegality of his succession because the following century saw a remarkable transformation in the kingdom. The economy prospered both at home and in overseas trade and colonisation. England became a power to be reckoned with on the international political scene. The idea of a separate and distinct island race came to the fore with the breaking of religious ties with Rome and through the distinctly English literary and musical renaissance of such as Marlowe, Shakespeare, Tallis and Byrd. The changes brought about by these new attitudes and realities were many and various. We can see them in microcosm by looking at Uttoxeter during this period.

Prosperity was enhanced by a rise in population. This is generally accepted by historians although the evidence for it is very patchy. Uttoxeter's population cannot be more than guessed at in the sixteenth century. Although the church has a continuous run of registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, it only goes back to 1596. A certificate of 1563 mentions 240 people, who were heads of households. If we use a multiplier of six (to cover wives and children) we get a figure for the town of 1440 people but we do not know how many people were excluded. A figure of 1600 from the year 1604 is sometimes mentioned but no source is given. The next reliable census of population is the list of hearths which were chargeable or not, for the hearth tax of 1666. This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. Here we may say that two sources give conflicting figures which lead to a population of between 3500 and 4000. (1) Evidence from the parish registers of the early seventeenth century bears out this rise in population.

In the middle ages we saw how population pressure led to the cultivation of poor land and an eventual famine. The case in the Tudor century was different. Because of the increased demand of a rising population, prices rose particularly from 1550 on. The rate of inflation was 3% a year. This may seem very moderate to us today but there were not the welfare facilities to cope with the problems inflation brought that there are today. However, to meet this rising demand, new agricultural methods were pioneered. It was an agricultural revolution. To make for increased production, much inclosure of wastes took place. There were complaints about the destruction of traditional pasture for the sake of wool production but opposition was not often as effective as in Crakemarsh, just outside Uttoxeter, in the late fifteenth century. In the 1470's Sir John Delves sought to inclose the commons. His hedges were immediately thrown down by men from Uttoxeter. Sir John re-erected and guarded them. Probably as a result of this local pressure the heir, Sir James Blount, re-opened the commons. Then his heir, Sir Robert Sheffield, renewed the inclosures and, in 1502-3, his tenants brought an action against him. (2) Generally in Staffordshire inclosure was rare. The 1517 Commissioners on Inclosure found that only 488½ acres had been inclosed in the county and 312 of these acres were for parks and only 148 for pasture. (3).

Around Uttoxeter more land was cultivated by the simple expedient of further encroaching on the ward of the Needwood forest. In a 1559 survey of the Duchy of

Lancaster, William Humberston (working in the north) found the Uttoxeter ward to be disafforested and the deer gone. The situation had not been helped by the keeper in 1540, one Bykley. He was detected in the removal of loads of wood and claimed in defence that they were the perquisites of his job. Examination showed that he had sold 514 loads of wood from the five wards of the forest in one year, including 64 from Uttoxeter. (4) Redfern has the keeper of the Uttoxeter ward selling 841 loads of timber in one year but this seems too high a figure to be reliable. (5)

Apart from using new land, new techniques were introduced in the second half of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, which helped increase the production on existing land. In some areas the idea of permanent tillage and grassland was discontinued. A shifting cultivation was introduced using new fallow crops and grasses. Waste land was occasionally cultivated but not on a simple rotation system. Instead it was cultivated for two or three years after the heavy application of lime and manure and then allowed to revert to waste for some years. Marsh was drained. Stock-breeding was improved. For better grazing the floating water meadow was introduced. This was particularly suitable for the Dove Valley and helped to lead to the growth of specialised dairy farming in the area, with Uttoxeter as its centre and market. (6)

The result of all this improvement was increased prosperity in Uttoxeter. Several families became quite wealthy e.g. Mynors, Startyn, Degg, Chamberlain, Hart, Sergeant, Ouldfield, Busby and Mottram. (7) Parallel with this general increase in wealth went an expansion in the education system. Although the idea of the monasteries being centres of education and being replaced after their dissolution in 1536 and 1539 by new grammar schools, may be too simple an explanation of what went on, there was an undoubtedly increase in schools, students at university and at the inns of court in the later sixteenth century. Uttoxeter had a part in this expansion with the opening in 1558 of the grammar school founded by Thomas Alleyne. The school has survived to this day, changing its name and function in the 1970's to "Thomas Alleyne High School," a comprehensive upper school for the town for pupils aged 13 to 18.

It was originally one of three 'grammar' schools founded by Alleyne at Stone, Stevenage and Uttoxeter, offering a rigorous classical education. Thomas Alleyne was a clerical pluralist. He appears to have held the livings of Shirland, Thornhill and Stevenage at the same time but this was not the foundation of the wealth that allowed him to endow three schools. That came as a result of an inheritance from his younger brother, Ralph. He was an alderman and sheriff of the city of London and a member of the Grocers' Company. He left his brother Thomas one-third of his wealth, to be used for charitable purposes. Thomas bought estates in Staffordshire, Kent, Leicestershire, Hertfordshire and London of about 1300 to 1400 acres. By his will of May 1558, proved on February 7th, 1559, he secured the endowment of his three schools. His land was worth about £80 a year. From this the masters of the three schools were paid £13-6s-8d (£13.33) a year each. He also supported four old men in Stevenage (£5-6s-8d), a chaplain to say masses twice a week at Sudbury, one poor scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge (£2 a year), four more chaplains to say services on family anniversaries (£8 a year), James Allen (£10 a year) and the repair of the schools (£1-6s-8d). (8) In a codicil to the will, Trinity College became the trustees and thus the controlling influence over the future of the schools.

It is worthwhile going into some detail about the rules of the school because they tell us something of Thomas Alleyne's thinking and even more of the educational attitudes of the time. (9) Pupils were to come from within the town or from a radius of two or three miles and must know their grammar in English. So it was not to be an elementary school of any kind. Pupils could be taken in by the master from further afield at his discretion and profit. So the school worked on two levels. Suitable local boys got free education but if they came from any distance they had to pay. It was common in both schools and universities at the time for masters to work a private enterprise system to boost their earnings. The school day started at 7 a.m. in winter and 6 a.m. in summer. There was a dinner break from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. and the pupils went home at 5 p.m. Immediately one notices how long was the school day. Eight hours of lessons in winter and nine in summer.

The school was a religious foundation and Alleyne wished this to be an integral part of each day's schooling. Morning school began with the penitential Psalm 51, kneeling, followed by the Lord's prayer, the creed and a special collect: "O most merciful father, maker of heaven and earth, we most humbly beseech thee for Jesus Christ's sake to have mercy upon us and give us grace to increase in virtue and learning to the perpetual fame and thankfulness of our founder, Master Allen, and especially to the profit of thy holy name, who livest and reignest one God world without end, Amen." At 1 p.m. the pupils said the ten commandments in Latin and repeated the morning's prayers. Before they went home they said the Deus Misereatur (Psalm 67). Such a strict religious regime was neither unusual nor unexpected of a school in Tudor times. Education had been a function of the religious in the middle ages. Although it was no longer under the control of monastic orders, it retained its religious connotations.

Holidays at the school were relatively short. There was one half day a week out of six teaching days but this was not fixed. It was given if the pupils showed that they deserved it. At Easter the holiday was from Thursday in Passion week until Monday after Low Sunday, some eleven days. At Whitsuntide the pupils had one week off. As an example of the strictness of the time, which was probably a reflection of the value placed on education, a pupil could be expelled from the school if he took any extra holiday without getting special permission. Conduct within the school was also closely defined. To help the pupils improve their Latin, all communications both in and out of school by the boys were to be in that language. This was probably an optimistic rule, but it shows the importance attached to the use of Latin as more than a literary language. Swearing, making dishonest gains, consorting with evil company or with anyone thought to be a hindrance to learning were to be grounds for expulsion unless the pupil concerned amended his behaviour. Also all scholars were to behave gently to all kinds of people. The enforcement of such rules must have been very much up to the school's master. The scholars were enjoined to love and reverence their master and gently receive punishments for their faults. Schooling in this period is often characterised as hard and brutal, with frequent resort to corporal punishment. These rules suggest a more gentle but none the less strict regime.

The master was not, however, bound completely by these rules. He was to enforce good order but was allowed to change things in the school if it was to the betterment of the pupils. The school was kept clean and tidy by one of the poor scholars, who was paid 2d. for the job. The rules seem to have worked and the school undoubtedly catered for a demand. In 1567 the master, Thomas Pynder, had eighty boys in his charge.

One of the functions for which these better educated citizens were fitted was the administration of local government. In the later middle ages power in Uttoxeter had been in the hands of the sheriff of the county (a royal appointee) and the officials of the Duchy of Lancaster. During the sixteenth century there was both a shift in power and an increase in the power of the parish. This last became the main instrument of government social policy. The leading man in the county now held the post of Lord Lieutenant. As such he had to organise the musters or levies of soldiers for the crown. Next in authority were the commissioners or justices of the peace. They were originally appointed in the fourteenth century as judicial officials to control the untrammelled authority of sheriffs. They met at the quarter sessions and soon exercised local governmental functions as the government was forced to take over the charitable work of the dissolved monasteries. Provision had to be made for the poor and the J.P.'s saw that it was done correctly. Also, as a result of legislation under Elizabeth I, they had to fix local wage rates. But the basic unit of civil and church government was the parish and Uttoxeter was of such a size that the town and parish were contiguous. The vicar and churchwardens controlled not only church affairs but were the leading lights in the parish's civil affairs. After 1555 the road system within each parish became its own responsibility. Paid officials supervised the work and a rate was levied to cover the cost. Although J.P.'s supervised the care of the poor, the parish carried out the work. By the Poor Law Acts of 1597 and 1601 this principle of parish responsibility was organised. Overseers of the poor were elected at the parish vestry meeting and a poor rate levied.

As justices, leading citizens had to deal with all manner of crime. There were assaults, burglaries and attacks on land and property. A typical example would be the case of Jane Ingleby of Uttoxeter, heard at the quarter sessions of May 1597. She was a spinster and was indicted for felony and burglary in the house of . . . (blank in the records) and for stealing a bill worth 2s. from the said Bradburye. She was committed for trial at the next assizes and whipped. (10) A different kind of problem dealt with by the justices was the illegitimate child. In 1589 the future of the bastard child of Margaret Urlande and John Roderam was secured. The baby had been kept for the previous six weeks by John. Margaret was now to be responsible for nourishing it and John was ordered to pay 6d. a week to the mother. The J.P.'s had dealt with the case as a result of a petition from the girl's mother Wenefryde. (11)

Tradesmen from Uttoxeter did not aspire to be J.P.'s. That was a duty of the gentry. Rather, the leading tradesmen of the town may be seen in the role of jurors at the quarter sessions. These were chosen from the five hundreds of the county, the Liberties of the Duchy of Lancaster and Eccleshall. Normally only one or two men from Uttoxeter were chosen for each session. The list which follows, covering 1588-98, shows the men chosen and the years in which they served:

Richard Startin	1588–98	
Thomas Middleton	1588–95	
Thomas Hart	1590–8	(first for Uttoxeter Woodland)
Thomas Mastian	1595–8	) the same ?
Thomas Mastergent	1596–8	
Thomas More	1598	(12)

Each hundred had a constable who brought people who were indicted before the magistrates and had various small administrative duties. One of these was to present a

list of alekeepers in the hundred to the magistrates. Here are the returns for Uttoxeter in the 1590's:

4 April	1594	41
28 September	1594	29
31 March	1597	27
September	1599	34
March	1600	33
September	1600	38
April	1601	34
		(13)

Uttoxeter is not to be seen as a town of drunkards because of these figures. Rather they are a reflection of two things, firstly the need for alehouses in a market town that had large numbers of animals for sale which had come some distance and, secondly, that alekeepers were often men who owned shops and whose wives brewed ale for sale in those shops. This explains the constantly changing number of alekeepers even within periods of six months. Tradesmen in the town were beginning to be truly prosperous. If they had agricultural holdings then these were becoming profitable. As trade expanded so did their turnover in town. All in all the sixteenth century was a good time for Uttoxeter. At the turn of the century we get the first of many charities set up by the wealthy for the poor of the town. This went hand in hand with the development of the parish provision for the poor but was a reflection both of caring and riches on the part of local people. In April 1594 the will of Mrs. Mary Blount left £100 to relieve people who suffered by fire, death of cattle, sickness, etc., if they were able to repay a loan. Gradually the sum accrued and land was bought to yield an income of £14 a year. During the seventeenth century the town had twenty new charitable bequests. They may all be read on painted boards in the parish church.

Charity had been one of the main functions of the monasteries in the middle ages and when they were swept away in the 1530's some provision had to be made. This we have seen came from the government and private individuals. Yet the dissolution of the monasteries was just one part of the wholesale change brought about by the English Reformation. The church in England was no longer to be one small part of the catholic church under the Pope in Rome. Rather the church was to be of England with the monarch as its head or, later, governor. Doctrinal and liturgical changes were made which removed England from the Roman fold and took the church towards the ideas of Luther and Calvin. The English Reformation is a complicated series of events with advances in some fields often offset by regression in others. In relation to Uttoxeter, the best thing is probably to look at the evidence we have for this period in church history and expand from it.

The first real changes came with the legislation passed by the Reformation parliament of 1529 to 1536. By these laws the power of the Pope in this land was broken and an independent English church established. This would not have affected the priests and people of Uttoxeter. Because the church was to be English, it was necessary to find out its wealth. This was done by the Valor Ecclesiasticus of 1535. This found the living of Uttoxeter to have a value of £6-17s (£6.85) to the vicar and 10s (50p) to Lichfield cathedral. To the church were attached two chantries of Our Lady's service and the Holy Trinity. These were altars in the church each attended by a priest which were endowed to chant masses for the dead. They were valued at £5-9s-6d (£5.48). These figures made Uttoxeter one of the better livings in the diocese of Lichfield where only two vicarages were worth £10. The area was generally very poor, only Rochester and

#### Chichester dioceses being poorer. (14)

The chantries fell under the royal scrutiny and were abolished in 1545, at the end of the reign of Henry VIII. It was probably obvious that this would occur, for between 1530 and 1547 half the chantries in Staffordshire disappear from the records but not those of Uttoxeter. That of Our Lady's service was served by Edward Careless in the 1530's and Richard Wayne in the 1540's. The latter stayed on until 1548 when he received a pension of £6-13s-4d (£6.67) until his death between 1557 and 1559. The priest of the Trinity chantry in the 1530's was John Bee. This chantry had only been founded in 1523. John Bee died in 1555 but he had not been in receipt of a pension and we do not know when or if his chantry was suppressed. (15)

In the reign of Edward VI from 1547 to 1553 the changes in the church were more obvious to the ordinary people. Although churches had had Bibles in English since 1538, with the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552 all services were conducted in English. There seems to have been no opposition to these changes in Uttoxeter. Hand in hand with these service changes went a new, more simplified view of liturgy. Vestments were to be reduced in number and variety. In 1553 an Inventory was made of the plate, vestments and linen held by each church and the entry for Uttoxeter, made on May 8th, was long. The church had a silver gilt chalice and paten, a copper gilt cross and staff, a copper pyx in a red silk case, three vestments with a matching number of albs, amices, fans and stoles, two suits (or sets) of old vestments, four copes (three of which were old and of silk), a red and blue velvet pall and a blue velvet corporal case. Pall and corporal were both names for rich cloths used to cover the elements at the Eucharist. There were also three altar cloths and towels, a veil, a brass holy water stoup, a tin cruet, three tunicles of old silk, a pair of organs, four great bells (one used for the clock), a sanctus bell (for use in the mass) and three silk pillows.

All this suggests a well stocked church, an active centre for the religious life of the town. The investigators, eager to root out Romanism and superstition, left the church with just the following: a chalice, a paten of silver, four linen cloths, a surplice for the curate and four great bells in the steeple. Church services became less mysterious, elaborate and ceremonial. The reformers of Edward VI's reign wanted a simple service with attention focused on the word of God and its exposition by the preacher. The importance of the Eucharist was reduced.

It is interesting to see what the businessmen of Uttoxeter made of these changes. They had organised the sale of some of the old treasures even before the inventory was made. A forty-two ounce silver gilt cross had been sold for £9-16s (£9.80) by Thomas Hart, Thomas More, Richard Starten, Robert Russell, William Harte, John Taylor, Thomas Chamberlen, William Middleton, Robert Taylor and Ralf Bagnold without the assent of the rest of the parishioners. William Mastergent and Richard Flier were the purchasers. £9-15s (£9.75) was raised by the sale of two silver censers to John Taylor and Lewes Walker, the money being delivered to the churchwardens (neither of whom was a member of the list of men who sold the cross). Also sold were a partly gilt silver chalice and two brass candlesticks. (16)

Later in 1553 Edward VI died to be succeeded by his older sister Mary. She sought to bring England back into the Roman fold. Much of the Edwardian reformation was reversed. This led to problems of deprivation of clergy and the persecution of the staunch Protestants. There were few problems in the diocese of Lichfield as long as

the conservative Richard Sampson was bishop (1543-54). On his death Ralph Bayne was appointed. He was a rigid traditionalist and forty two married clergy in the diocese were deprived. Marriage had only been allowed for the few years of Edward VI's reign. It seems clear that the vicar of Uttoxeter from June 1554 was Nicholas Harwar M.A. He resigned in 1557 but, having been appointed in Queen Mary's reign, it is unlikely that he did so because of Protestant beliefs or marriage. He was succeeded by George Hilton.

In November 1558 Mary died and her successor was Elizabeth I. She also made religious changes. The English church was again to be independent but was not to be as Protestant as it had become by 1553. Services were to be in English but the Prayer Book included much Catholic theology. Most of the clergy in Staffordshire were happy to comply. Seven were deprived for not subscribing and twelve more resigned their benefices in the next decade for reasons that are not clear. George Hilton subscribed but seems to have died late in 1559. The church may not have found a successor until March 1561 when Arthur Blunt was instituted but he is supposed to have been instituted on the resignation of the last vicar. There is mention in 1560 of a certain Anthony Draycott of Uttoxeter and Checkley being deprived but he may not have been vicar of Uttoxeter. As it was Arthur Blunt did not last long. He was deprived in 1566.

This may have been due to the zeal of the new bishop. Ralph Bayne lost his episcopal throne after refusing to give the sacrament to the new Queen. His replacement was Thomas Bentham. He had been an exile in Zurich (the centre for Zwingli's ideas) and was to hold the office for twenty years. He was not impressed by the clergy of his diocese. Although most of the clergy had conformed they were really carrying on their old practices and usages. He therefore issued instructions in 1565 to clear up any misunderstandings. Clergy had to use the Book of Common Prayer, there had to be more and better preaching, the service was to be recited clearly and the clergy were to maintain proper standards in their personal life. In the church altars were not to be used, they must use a holy table and any kind of idolatry had to go. Particular mention was made of holy water, Good Friday sepulchres and hand bells. (17) All this would suggest that the Reformation did not bring radical change to Uttoxeter. The town was part of an area that was reluctant to change but was not so traditionalist as to risk persecution for its recalcitrance.

This view is further reinforced when we look at the state of the clergy in the area. Of 109 clergy in 1593 only 14 were university graduates and only 16 licensed to preach. In 1602 the figures were 20 graduates out of 91 clergy with 21 licensed to preach. So although the Protestants were keen on the exposition of God's word through the sermon, this was not possible in a lot of Staffordshire. Uttoxeter exemplified this. The vicar from 1566 until his death in 1617 was Thomas Barnes. He did not appear before the bishop for examination until 1593. According to the returns made for 1602 and 1604 he was not a preacher, did not have a degree and was ignorant and scandalous. He lived in a newly built vicarage, the core of today's vicarage. (18) Much of the old house had been destroyed in a disastrous fire of August 21st, 1596 and it was quickly rebuilt.

The ineffectiveness of Barnes may account for the first records we have of Roman Catholic recusants in the town in the 1580's. In 1580 William Trisbye was absent from church for over two months. Edmund Draycott was mentioned for five months absence

up to August 1586 and earlier in 1585. Three women are mentioned in the period 1590-3. (19) This may be insubstantial but it is the start of a tradition in the town for independence in religious views. The area around Uttoxeter was pastoral and farmed mainly by small farmers. The town was therefore not dependent on the influence of rich landowners. This encouraged a general spirit of independence which was to seen more explicitly in the seventeenth century.

NOTES:

- ( 1 ) Staffordshire Incumbents and Parochial Records (1530-1680) S.H.C. (1915) p.LXXII and Hearth Tax - Totmanslow Hundred S.H.C. (1925) pp.210-9
- ( 2 ) V.C.H. vol. VI ed. M.W. Greenslade and D.A. Johnson (1979) p.52
- ( 3 ) V.C.H. vol.I ed. W. Page (1908) p.286-7
- ( 4 ) Sir O. Moseley: History of Tutbury (1832) p.138
- ( 5 ) F. Redfern: History of Uttoxeter (1865) p.66-7
- ( 6 ) V.C.H. vol. VI pp. 50, 68-9, much based on E. Kerridge: The Agrarian Revolution (1967)
- ( 7 ) W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern, part III (n.d.) p.23
- ( 8 ) Redfern: Uttoxeter p.313
- ( 9 ) W.G. Torrance: The History of Alleyne's Grammar School, Uttoxeter' (1958) pp.17-19
- (10) Quarter Session Rolls (1594-7) S.H.C. (1932) pp.307-8
- (11) Quarter Session Rolls (1581-9) S.H.C. (1929) p.333
- (12) Quarter Session Rolls, 4 vols. S.H.C. (1929, 1930, 1932, 1935)
- (13) Quarter Session Rolls (1594-7) S.H.C. (1932) pp. 49, 85, 273 (1598-1602) S.H.C. (1935) pp. 137, 206, 252, 433.
- (14) Rev. W.S. Hutchinson: The Archdeaconry of Stoke-on-Trent (1893) p. 142
- (15) Staffordshire Incumbents p. 295
- (16) Staffordshire Incumbents p. 294 and Hutchinson: Archdeaconry p. 189
- (17) M.W. Greenslade and D.G. Stuart: A History of Staffordshire (1965) p. 56
- (18) Staffordshire Incumbents p. 296
- (19) Quarter Session Rolls (List of recusants) 1586 S.H.C. (1927) pp. 145, 151, Quarter Session Rolls (1581-9) p. 57 and Roman Catholicism in Elizabethan and Jacobean Staffordshire S.H.C. 4th series IX, p. 48

## CHAPTER 5 — Independence and Expansion (1603–1700)

The last decade of Elizabeth I's reign had seen an end to the tranquility at home and prosperity of her reign. In the 1590's successive bad harvests caused unrest, famine and dissatisfaction. A continuing war with Spain was an annoyance while the campaign in Ireland drained the royal coffers. Elizabeth's death in 1603 ushered in a new royal dynasty, the Stuarts, but the problems remained. James I found himself with inadequate finances to rule effectively and problems of foreign policy, religion and the power of Parliament. The century which followed his accession was to prove to be one of upheaval, revolution and dramatic change. Attitudes became so hardened that the country sank into Civil War. Charles I was executed, a move which horrified and worried other European monarchs. The victorious Parliamentary party established a 'puritan' state but to rule effectively Cromwell had to resort to military power. And then, in 1660, Charles II was restored and it seemed as if the old order had been re-established. In reality, both political and economic power had changed hands. The King reigned but policy was decided by the landed and wealthy aristocracy. Economically the country had become a great trading nation and the foundations of Empire in India and the new world were established.

In all this dramatic change Uttoxeter took its part. During the seventeenth century it expanded in size. The parish registers are almost complete for the century and so we are able to look in detail at the baptisms, marriages and burials. Overall there must have been some increase in the size of the town between 1600 and 1700. During every decade of the century more people were born than were buried. This can be seen clearly in the following table :

Number of baptisms more than burials					
1601–10	79	1631–40	94	1661–70	302
1611–20	50	1641–50	69	1671–80	151
1621–30	30	1651–60	155	1681–90	88
					(incomplete) 1691–1700 200

Either the town must have grown in size or there was considerable emigration to the surrounding countryside. The fact that the population was increasing can be more firmly established by looking at the numbers of baptisms and burials. Here I have averaged out the figures for each period of five years. This is so that exceptional years do not interfere with one's understanding of the general trends.

The table which follows demonstrates clearly that the number of baptisms was rising steadily through the century while the number of burials did not keep pace.

Years	Baptisms	Burials
1601-05	44.8	37.2
1606-10	56.6	44.0
1611-15	56.0	47.2
1616-20	51.6	50.6
1621-25	52.6	53.0
1626-30	58.4	51.6
1631-35	59.6	51.6
1636-40	62.4	51.6
1641-45	71.4	60.4

1646-50	65.8	63.0
1651-55	67.2	49.2
1656-60	62.4	49.2
1661-65	78.2	40.4
1666-70	75.6	53.0
1671-75	69.4	53.4
1676-80	79.6	65.4
1681-85	82.8	87.2
1686-90	100.6	76.2
1691-95	104.8	75.8
1696-1700	94.0	83.0

*(5 Year Averages)*

This demonstrates clearly that the population was increasing but we can learn more about the population pattern if we look at the figures for each month of the year over the course of the century. Taking baptisms first the trend is clear:

*Average number of baptisms in each month 1600–1700*

January	6.46	May	6.10	September	5.04
February	6.56	June	5.10	October	5.52
March	7.30	July	5.09	November	5.49
April	6.54	August	4.67	December	5.71

The low point is in summer and the peak came from January to April each year. These children were conceived from April through to July. This is predictable and the figures for burials are equally so. The peak is from January to April with markedly lower figures during the summer months. The effects of cold weather are probably sufficient explanation. It is interesting that the figures for March and April are so high and this is probably because the warmer weather of spring coincided with the worst time of the year for food supplies.

*Average number of burials in each month 1600–1700*

January	5.69	May	4.96	September	4.38
February	5.30	June	4.44	October	3.85
March	5.81	July	4.36	November	4.37
April	5.39	August	4.22	December	4.85

The figures for marriages are interesting evidence of the religious habits of the time. The church frowned upon marriage in Lent, as it still does today, but in the seventeenth century Advent was an equally inauspicious time for weddings. There were other short seasons of a few days each year when marriage was prohibited but they do not seem to have had much effect on the overall figures.

*Average number of marriages in each month 1600–1700*

January	1.02	May	1.23	September	0.80
February	1.03	June	1.29	October	1.16
March	0.18	July	0.93	November	1.15
April	1.44	August	0.97	December	0.50

Although Easter is a movable feast and Lent lasts for forty days, it usually includes all of March. Advent covers all of December except the last few days. It is interesting

that abstinence from marriage during Advent seems to have been less strictly observed as time went on:

*Average number of marriages in December*

1600–50	0.22
1651–1700	0.78

Within all these trends and averages though, there are exceptional months and years that deserve notice. These are mainly to do with burials and probably represent minor epidemics. For example, in 1614 when you would expect about four burials a month, there were 10 in March, 13 in April and 6 in May - half the year's total in three months. Similar periods of unusual death were the first six months of 1616, early in 1639, January to May 1646, August and September of 1670, early in 1683, the summer of 1687, autumn 1694, autumn 1695 and early in 1699. A particularly bad period was in 1684-5 when the following are the figures for burials:

Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.
11	6	12	6	12	5	3	24	14	10	13	11	12

That is a total of 139 burials in thirteen months, when the average for the same period would have been 94 (and that includes the 1684-5 figures in the average).

The most extraordinary and hard to explain figures relate to marriages. In the years before 1640 and the outbreak of Civil War, there were about 13 marriages a year. Then the figures take a sudden plunge:

*Average number of marriages a year*

1641–45	6.4
1646–50	6.0
1651–55	6.8

Even more interesting are the particular figures for individual years. In 1644 there were 4 marriages, in 1645 just one and in 1646 none at all. In 1651 there were just 3. However, in 1656 there were suddenly 20! Obviously the disruption caused by the Civil War played its part in these figures. Young men were busy in the 1640's with the marching armies. Uttoxeter, as we shall see later, was right on the border between land controlled by the King and Parliament. It could be that people delayed their marriages because of the war. There seems to have been a slight effect on the baptism figures. From 1645 to 1660 the upward movement of the graph is halted.

The completeness of the Uttoxeter figures allows us to make hesitant estimates of the size of family - a subject about which historians rarely agree. To work out figures for the whole population in this period we often have to use figures for heads of house-holds and multiply the number we think was an average for each household. Figures from the parish register can help us to estimate this household size or multiplier. If we take the number of marriages and put this figure on a graph and then superimpose the number of baptisms, multiplied by four or five say, we can see clearly where the two lines come closest together. This will give us the number of children per family to which we add two for the multiplier. The results for Uttoxeter are interesting:

1600–40	4 to 5 children
1640–60	9 children
1660–1700	6 to 6½ children

Compare this with the following using the same method:

1960	2.33
1965	2.13
1970	1.88

The figure for 1640 to 1660 is obviously distorted by the small number of marriages but generally we can say that family size increased through the seventeenth century. (1).

Another way of estimating population is to use the assessments for the Hearth Tax of 1666. This gives details of about 330 households which were assessed at different rates according to their wealth and about 150 who were not chargeable because they paid a rent of less than 20s. (£1) a year. Using the suggested number of children per household above, of six, that would give Uttoxeter a population of about 3800 in the 1660's. We cannot be any more accurate than this because the Hearth Tax returns are not absolutely clear and the multiplier is an educated estimate. Of those charged, the vast majority, 298, were assessed at one, two or three hearths. Thomas Kinnersley of Loxley Hall was assessed at eight hearths as was Mr. John Hurtt. But the wealthiest man in the Uttoxeter area was James Wood. He was assessed at eleven hearths. (2)

James Wood was the son of a London salter. In the 1640's Charles I stayed in his house. He is recorded as a member of the gentry in the 1660's. He was a solicitor. He is spoken of as a Presbyterian and of no great ability or parts, but good enough at getting money. (3) He certainly gained respectability with time, for he is recorded as a Justice of the Peace in 1692 and 1702 although, by the latter date, he was well past three score years and ten. It is interesting that in the 1660's the leading citizen of the town should be a solicitor and merchant's son and not a landowner. This is perhaps a key to the history of Uttoxeter. No large landowning family held real power in the town.

Yet Uttoxeter was by no means a poor town, even early in the seventeenth century, when, generally, economic prospects took a down-turn. On May 24th, 1625 the manor of Uttoxeter, which belonged to the Duchy of Lancaster, was disposed of to a syndicate of Lord William Craven, Sir George Whitmore, Sir William Whitmore and Mr. Gibson. They had the place surveyed and then sold it to a consortium of the inhabitants for £3120, who then sold or rented property in the town to lesser citizens. Thus from 1625 onwards Uttoxeter was its own lord of the manor. A survey of the former manorial lands was made in 1629 which showed that they were now held by 196 citizens. Their holdings ranged from over 500 acres down to a single acre.

Charles I, who succeeded in 1625, was often forced to insist on traditional rights to raise the money he needed, since it was becoming very difficult for a King to live "of his own" and Parliament was reluctant to vote him large "supplies." He may have sold his manorial rights to raise money. He certainly increased his income by fining gentlemen who refused knighthood in 1625. At the King's coronation, gentlemen worth more than £40 a year were supposed to go to London to be knighted.



THE QUAKER MEETING HOUSE c.1630

Very many refused and the King then fined them £10 to £20. This was traditional and had occurred with Edward VI, Mary, Elizabeth and during James I's reign. The average fine was £10 while the average fee for knighthood itself was £60 to £70. In Staffordshire 260 men were involved and they included Francis Kinnerley of Loxley and William Hart, Richard Middleton and Luke Busby of Uttoxeter. (4)

Generally, the town became more prosperous during the seventeenth century. While the economy stood still in the early part of the century and the Civil War hindered any advance, the years after 1660 saw a commercial expansion in England that affected all the economy, from major international traders such as the East India Company down to the smallest market town like Uttoxeter. The prosperity of the town may be seen from the profusion of charitable bequests made during the century. Seventeen are recorded worth about £175 a year. They were founded to support poor boys to become apprentices, poor widows, to give shoes and bread to the poor and for the poor not supported by the parish. Such bequests can be seen as a sign of practical Christian faith on the part of the benefactors but, equally, such gifts would not have been possible without the economic prosperity to create them.

Certain families became prominent in the records we have of this century. Repeatedly we find the names Mynors, Floyer, Hart, Startin and Middleton amongst others. Let us look at one or two of them. The Mynors had remained prominent in the town since the later middle ages. The 1629 survey revealed Walter Mynors as holding 350 acres. The family had a private chapel in the parish church. This had formerly been a chantry chapel which they had founded. They lived at Hollingbury Hall on the High Wood. Richard Mynors was a soldier in the Civil War and fought in the Dutch Wars while his son, William, managed to return eleven times from sailings to the East Indies before his death in October 1666.

Another prominent family were the Harts. In 1625 William had refused knighthood and had had to pay £10. This same William and his wife Anne gave a chalice to the church in 1637. In the 1629 survey a substantial holding of 285 acres is recorded for William's son, John Hart. A less reputable member of the family appears to have been Thomas Hart. He came before the Parliamentary Committee at Stafford as one of a group of men involved in the case of Mrs. Lees. This widow's cattle had strayed and a group of men, including Hart, arbitrarily seized and sold them.

The Floyer family had important connections with this committee. In the 1629 survey Richard Flier (there seem to have been numerous spellings of the name) held 343 acres. Another Richard was a barrister and a member of the Stafford committee. He was a grandson of an Uttoxeter mercer, presumably the Richard of the 1629 survey. A cousin of this barrister, Richard Pyott of Uttoxeter, was also on the committee as was yet another Floyer nephew, Simon Biddulph.

References to the Startin family are constantly to be found in the records but they were never 'gentlemen.' They were successful yeoman farmers. In the 1629 survey Richard Startin held 89 acres of land. He had been involved in a lucrative deal in 1625 with Thomas Degge. They had purchased the timber from Uttoxeter High Wood through the attorney-general of the Duchy of Lancaster, Sir Edward Moseley. This they then sold in small lots to other citizens. Richard had a brother called William who was not so well off. Richard's son, Timothy, ran into trouble in the Civil War. He was involved in the Lees cattle case but more importantly had his property confiscated by

the Stafford committee for being a Royalist. His wife Anne successfully petitioned for its return on the grounds that the family would be destitute without it.

Details of the histories of prominent families may be of interest to their relatives of today but they tend to tell us very little about the history of the town. Much more important are records of families which detail what they possessed. By looking closely at a family's possessions or the stock of a shop, we can learn a great deal about styles of life and trade at the time. We are fortunate in having such records for John Gilbert in 1661 and Thomas Salt in 1679.

John Gilbert was an ironmonger who lived in one of the row of houses between Market Place and what is now Queen Street. His will survives at the Lichfield Joint Record Office for January 18th, 1661. Although he owned a shop he seems to have kept pigs in a yard beside his house. He kept the stock for his shop up in the attics of his house where also were stored many useful items for the household, such as cheeses, corn, malt, oatmeal, hemp and ash balls (used in washing). In the shop he sold a bewildering variety of iron goods including chains, collars, bells, saws, scythes, arrow heads, locks and nails, and also rope, tar, pitch, glue, reins and saddles. Although trade was reasonably specialised, this did not hamper entrepreneurial enterprise. In his house there was comparatively little furniture. Tables, benches, stools and a few wooden chairs were usual in eating and living rooms with tableware of pewter. Valuables were kept in a special chest. To exclude draughts and for privacy, four poster beds were used upstairs. John Gilbert was probably a fairly representative tradesman of Uttoxeter in his day. He worked hard and sold a wide range of goods. His wife made things in a way we associate with rural households (butter, cheese, bread, etc) and the family had few luxuries. They probably ate very well but the house was utilitarian. (6)

In the case of Thomas Salt, a baker with a house at Bear Hill in Uttoxeter, we know of his belongings through a marriage settlement. In 1679 his daughter Deborah married Joshua Robinson and as part of the settlement the bride's father's house contents were listed. The full list may be read in one of Torrance's pamphlets. (7)

Tables	12	Feather or flock beds	10	Forms	9
Stools	21	Pillowcovers	12	Dishes	30
Bedsteads	6	Sheets (pairs)	20	Flagons	20
Blankets	20	Napkins	84	Chamber pots	9
Bolsters	12	Table cloths	12	Barrels	6
Cushions	42	Chairs	8	Spits	5

The full list is very long. The following general points may be made about such households. A lot of money went into having as good beds as possible and into bed linen. Similarly furniture may have been spartan by our standards, but money was poured into buying material for cushions, curtains, tablecloths and wall hanging rugs or carpets to offset the starkness. In the kitchen there was a profusion of iron and wooden utensils to aid cooking, while pewter was very common. If a family had much gold or silver for dining room use, it was a sure sign of substantial wealth.

The market was the key to Uttoxeter's wealth. It was always held on a Wednesday. To supply the thirsty traders, drovers and farmers we saw that dozens of alehouses held licences in the late Tudor period. In 1608 the figure was still 35. But by 1658 public

houses had become larger businesses to the detriment of the small alehouses. There were seven inns mentioned in the survey of that year, all bar one in Carter Street, clustered around the market area. Before we go into detail about the market this 1658 survey ought to be discussed. It was made by Peter Lightfoot, son of the vicar who had died in 1653. There is a map with all property owners marked, which accompanies a detailed list of everybody's landholding. This was thought for a long time to be a remarkable and original work. Research has revealed that it was actually an updating of the 1629 survey made by the Duchy of Lancaster. Lightfoot's map is a copy of an older one with new owners put on. His landholding list is very much that of 1629. (8)

The market was regulated by two burgesses, elected annually, to check all weights and measures and keep order. The Bailiff of markets took tolls from traders from out of town. Although the lordship of the manor passed to Uttoxeter citizens in 1625, the Duchy of Lancaster retained its rights over markets and fairs, selling them in 1626 to Henry Gorringe of Croxden. Butter and cheese were the most important goods sold after about 1650. The butter was sold in special unglazed cylindrical pots made at Burslem, which could hold fourteen pounds. They were of a uniform size and a surveyor checked that they contained the right amount of produce. Cheese was locally made and said to resemble Cheshire cheese. In the 1660's even London cheese-mongers thought it worthwhile to establish factorage at Uttoxeter. The cheese was transported to London by pack horse. Before the prominence of dairy produce, cattle had been the chief trade. Cattle that were sold might be driven as far as London but towards the end of the seventeenth century the importation of Irish cattle, that were fattened near to London, ruined the Uttoxeter trade. The number of cattle in the area also encouraged a certain amount of tanning and leather work in the town.

An important ingredient of a successful market was a network of good roads through the surrounding countryside. There were roads to Uttoxeter in the seventeenth century from Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stafford, Rugeley and Burton-on-Trent, Derby and one along the Dove Valley via Rocester. In the immediate vicinity of Uttoxeter they had been, since 1555, in the care of surveyors of the highway, appointed locally. Everybody was supposed to give six days' work a year to the maintenance of the roads. The rich tended to send carts and their servants. The work was not popular and in 1603 151 people refused to do more work after the worst holes had been repaired.(9) All trade coming via Sudbury and Doveridge had to use the ancient bridge over the river Dove just to the north-east of the town. This was constantly in bad repair in the second half of the century. The town was supposed to use the profits from the use of Broad Meadow and Netherwood Meadow for the purpose. They were 120 acres but were not exploited fully. As a result, the bridge was out of repair in 1662, was carried away by a flood in 1665, needed repair again in 1687 and was demolished by a flood in 1714. In 1665 and 1690 the county gave grants of £300 and £100 for repair work. (10) The town seems to have shown little interest in finding the money for the effective upkeep of this necessary structure.

The cost of roads and bridges was minor compared with the cost of the Civil War to Uttoxeter. We shall deal with the political and military aspects later, but here let us pause to consider the economic and social impact of this conflict on a small country town. Economically, the town could not have been in a worse position. As a market town it was an obvious source of provisions for both sides and with the Parliamentarians soon established at Stafford and the King's men holding out at Tutbury, the town was looked to by both sides.

We have the constables' accounts for the years up to 1653 and from them we can work out the cost to the town. The following figures speak for themselves:

1642–43	£68	
1644	£608-13s-2d	(We do not have
1645 (to 31 Oct)	£975- 7s-1d	figures for
1646 (to 31 Oct)	£796- 2s.	the missing
1646–1647 (to 31 May)	£ 97-17s-5d	years)
1649 (to 7 Nov)	£225-11s-5d	

The social cost was no less. Men were called to the musters to serve in the armies. As troops passed by they were often quartered in the town. The town had to provide provisions for such armies and was not always paid. For those who served in the army the cost could be great. The case of George Jennings of Uttoxeter is recorded in the quarter session records. He served with the Parliamentarians at the taking of Stafford and in Ireland and was claiming a pension. He had had his skull cut, an ear shot through, his cheek cut, his jaw broken, his right arm utterly maimed, his side run through and his thigh run through in two places by pikes. (12)

Men were called to military service at the musters. Each town or village selected a few men for the army and they came to a meeting place under the watch of the High Constable of each hundred. Then they were checked and recorded by the county's deputy lieutenants before being handed over to the army's officers. A serious incident occurred at Uttoxeter following the muster of 1640. Charles I had called for 300 men from Staffordshire to fight against Scotland. On July 1st, about 100 of the new soldiers began to assemble. The constables were ordered to stay with them just in case there was trouble. That evening Uttoxeter's constable heard that these recruits were about to destroy some posts and rails in High Wood and so he got forty to fifty townspeople to aid him. They arrived to find many rails broken down and the wood used for fires. They tried to quieten things down but with no success. So they attempted to seize the rioters but, after they had taken them, their fellow recruits rescued them. As the night drew on the deputy lieutenants retired two miles to their lodgings leaving the problem unsolved. On the next day, July 2nd, the High Constable of Totmansklow was empowered to bring in help from nearby farms because some soldiers had begun on the fences again. They were merely contained, for fear of a general affray. On July 3rd, the deputy lieutenants used the man raised locally to organise the recruits with quarters. A watch was kept all night and then, on July 4th, the men were marched off to join the army. A total of 17 were arrested and sent for trial. The whole incident suggests dissatisfaction with the system of recruiting by musters and with the poor provision made for these recruits at Uttoxeter. (13)

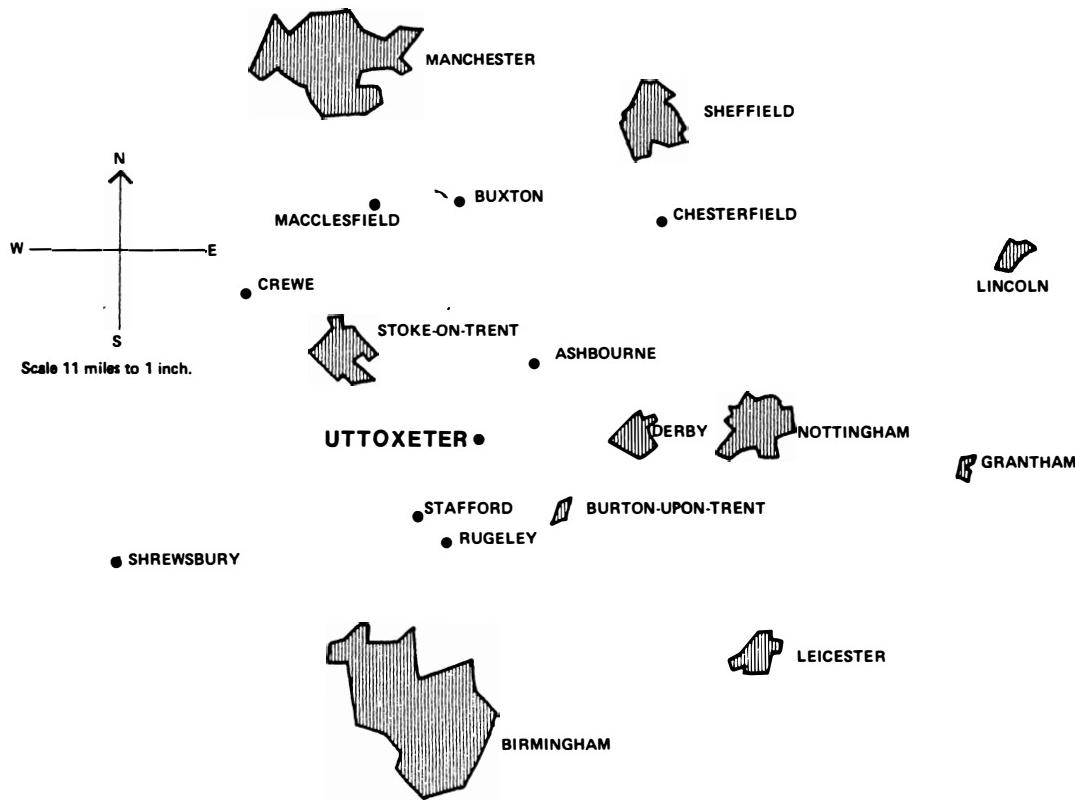
It also suggests that the ordinary people did not lack a will of their own and this is further exemplified in the case of Uttoxeter and the enclosure of local forest land. Once the timber in the High Wood had been sold in 1625 the question of grazing rights in this area of 500 acres became of interest to the local inhabitants, especially since they had bought the lordship of the manor from the King in the same year. It was suggested, in 1635, by Edward Oldfield and John Carter (who already had land on the High Wood) that this land should now be enclosed and rented out to them and a group of associates for grazing. The man they approached was Sir Edward Moseley, attorney-general of the Duchy of Lancaster. For such an action the Duchy seemed to need the consent of the freeholders, who had traditional grazing rights, and it was unlikely that it would be granted.

At this point the idea of a conspiracy has been suggested. Moseley and the projected tenants realised the probability of opposition and so got a case brought before the Duchy court against their own proposed action, the idea being to crush the claims of the freeholders and assert the King's rights. However, it can equally well be claimed that the projected tenants were out for better grazing for themselves and that Moseley's action in getting the case brought was to clarify the situation. If it could be shown that the land was really the King's, then the Duchy could compromise to satisfy the citizens of Uttoxeter and increase its own revenue from the area. One must remember that by the mid-1630's Charles I was hard-pressed financially. He had been ruling without Parliament since 1629 and was looking for any legal or traditional way of increasing his revenue.

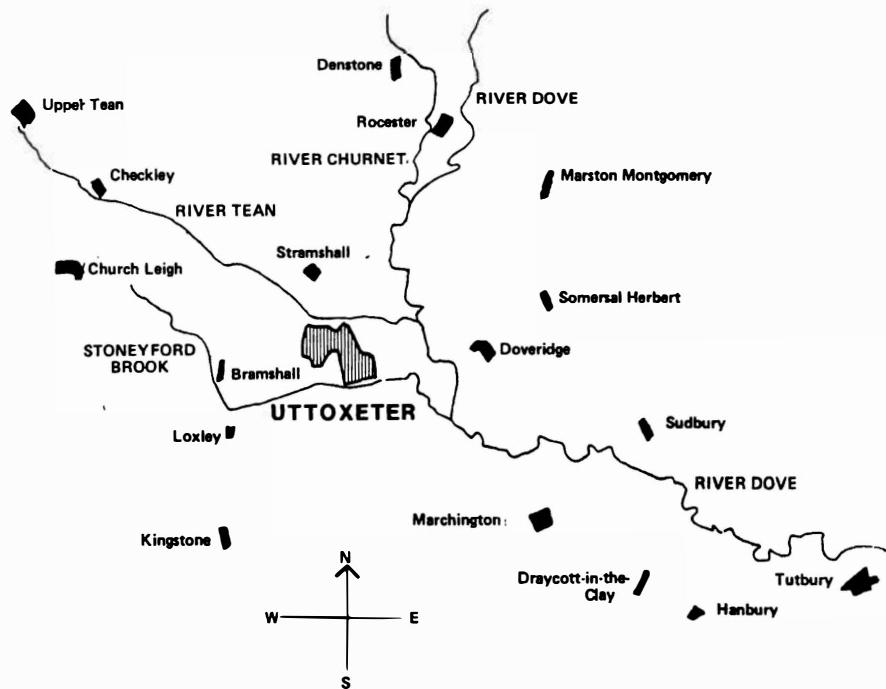
When the case came up in February 1636, nearly all the men of Uttoxeter mentioned in the record acknowledged that the land really belonged to the King. Peter Lightfoot protested that it was all a put up job, with the Duchy court dealing with a complaint by one of its own officers. The upshot was that William Sherwin and William Poker were sent with a petition to the King at Nottingham. By the look of things, the town was divided. A group with grazing interests wanted to see enclosure of the land and were willing to be tenants of the king for the grazing rights. A second group, with Lightfoot as spokesman, did not wish to recognise any royal rights over the land. They wanted the area to be unenclosed commons with traditional grazing rights.

The King's solution was to appoint a commission to hear the submissions of all those who had not agreed with the decision of the court of February 1636. A division of the land was decided upon, despite opposition, with boundaries to be fixed by two surveyors. Their report was submitted to the sheriff on 20th/22nd April, 1637. The King's portion was fixed at 196 acres and the town's at 129 acres. The King's share was granted to Richard Nevil at £12 an acre on the understanding that it would be enclosed. This he began to do but attempts were made by locals to stop the work. The Duchy's reply was to forbid grazing on any of the land until the destruction was rectified. In 1639 the local people broke down more fences and burnt some. They came out from the town in a group with a drummer. The constables were ordered to make arrests and failed to, while Nevil petitioned the King for a reduced rent because of the damage. An action against those involved was in preparation for hearing before the prerogative Court of the Star Chamber when Civil War put an end to it. (14) In the 1650's Parliament sought to disafforest areas that had been the crown's, to raise money to pay for military expenses. Although surveys and preparations for enclosure were made, local opposition in Staffordshire managed to save the rest of Needwood Forest until its demise at the start of the nineteenth century.

The coming of Civil War may have saved a court case for those opposed to enclosure in Uttoxeter but it was to have a telling effect on the town during the 1640's. While the King had ruled without Parliament in the 1630's many grievances came to the surface. Because the King had to raise money he had to tax and there was dislike of such devices as the extension of Ship Money to inland towns. The Totmanslow hundred was supposed to raise £468-16s-11d (£468:85) in 1635-6 for this tax. In religious matters the increase in visitations to stamp out any traces of nonconformity in the established church were deprecated. The vicar of Uttoxeter, Thomas Lightfoot, had held the living since 1617 and was known as having puritan sympathies. As long as beneficed clergy were left alone, the Church of England found compromises which accommodated puritan groups within the fold. The insistence on certain liturgical and

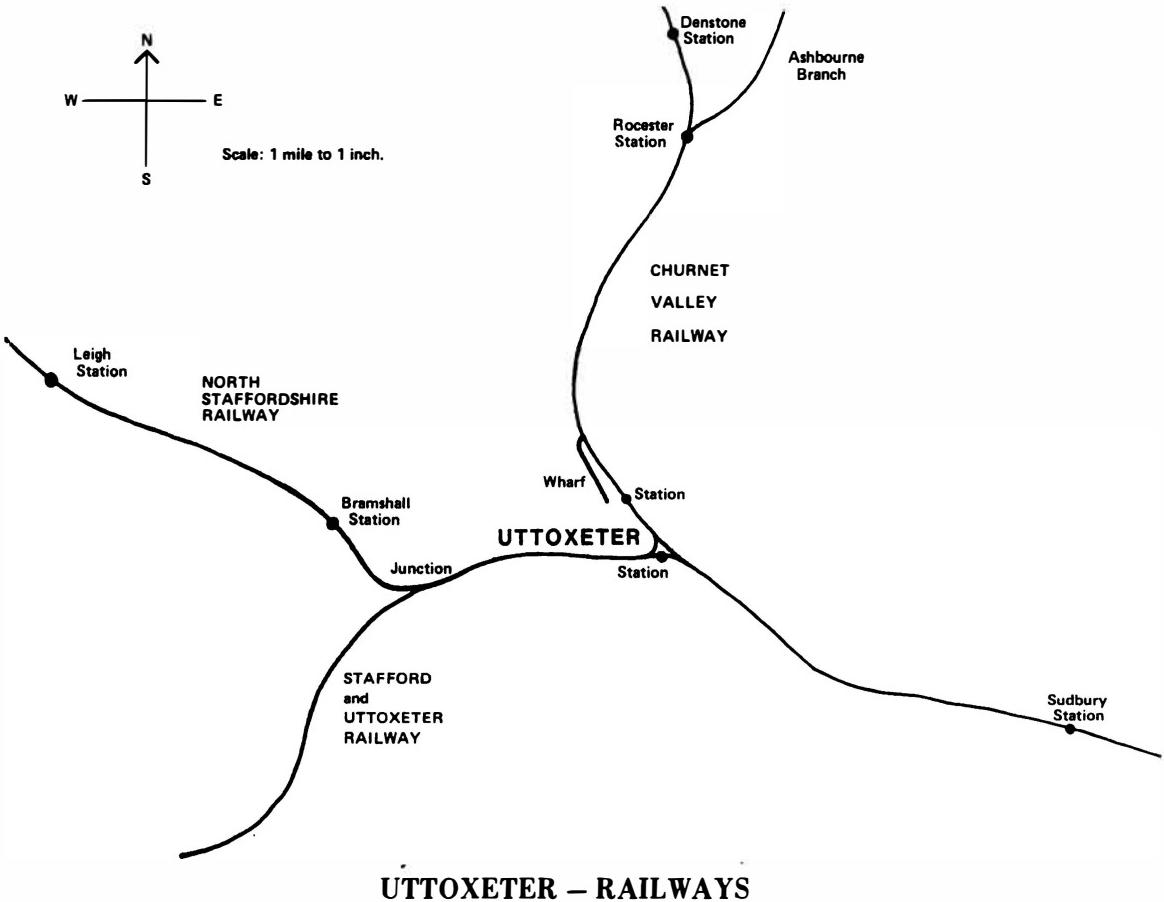


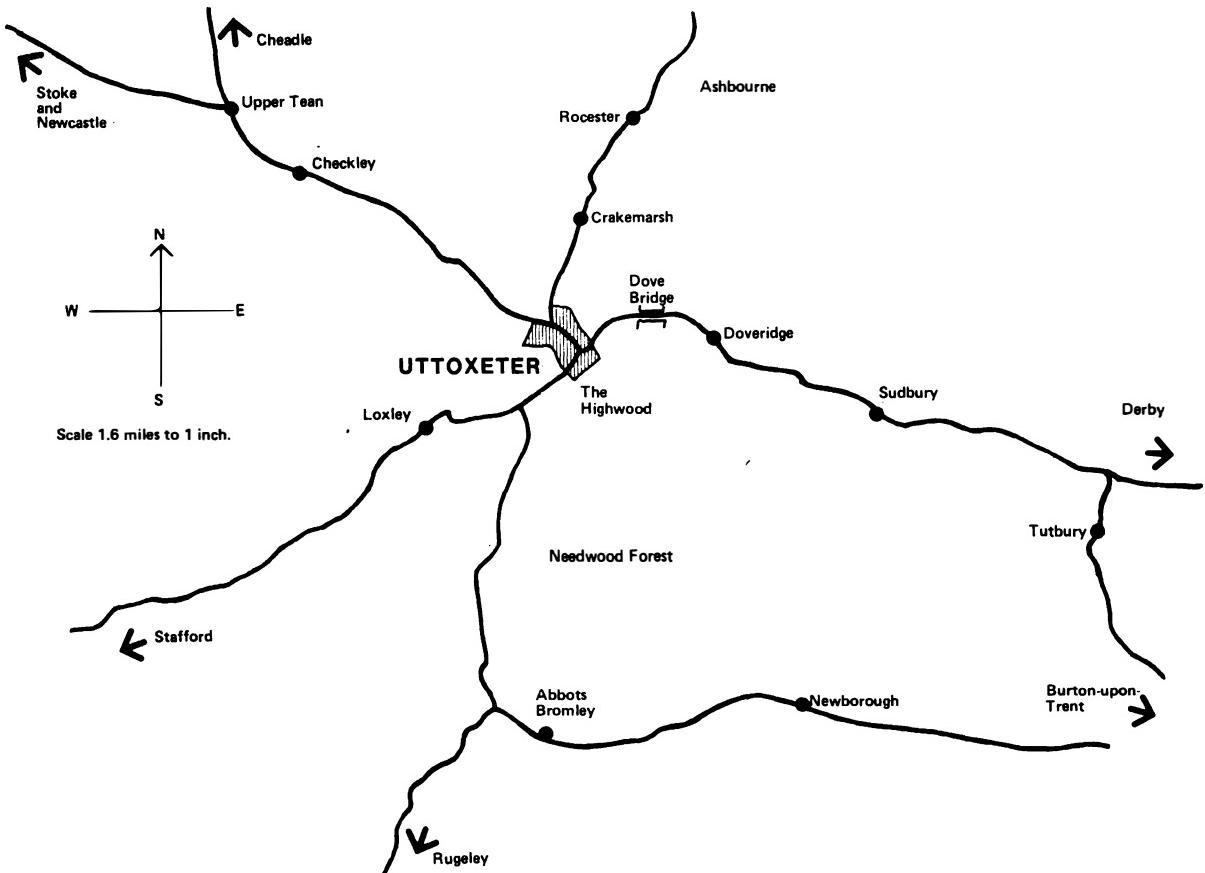
## THE MIDLANDS



Scale: 1.6 miles to 1 inch.

## UTTOXETER – VILLAGES – RIVERS





UTTOXETER – ROADS

ceremonial practices only led to a splintering of the established church. There was also a dislike of the King's power as exercised through his prerogative courts, such as the Court of the Star Chamber mentioned above.

As in many wars the actual chain of events which led to armed conflict had no sense of inevitability about it. Mistakes and mis-judgments were made by both sides and compromises went unsought until all felt that they had no option but to resort to arms. In Staffordshire the gentry saw the ensuing conflict as an excuse for riotous behaviour. Their response of November 1642 was to raise 800 foot soldiers and 200 carbines to keep order. Captains were appointed by Justices of the Peace. The men were to be collected if there was any danger of a loss of public order. In Staffordshire maintaining the social balance came before party interest.

Yet by this time Uttoxeter had already had to play host to the King on his way to Shrewsbury from Nottingham. He was in the town on the 19th and 20th of September, and stayed with James Wood. Some men of the town were recruited into his army. However, for the rest of 1642 the town was not directly involved in the fighting. This changed dramatically in 1643 as the Parliamentarians sought to take Stafford and Tutbury became a base for Royalist raiding parties. The one battle fought nearby was that of Hopton Heath, on Saturday, 18th March, 1643. It was not a large battle. The royalist forces were about 1200 and the Parliamentarians 1850. However, the advantage was with the smaller army as they had 800 cavalry. The Parliamentary army held a hill and was protected on its flanks by dragoons and 15 cannons. Men of Uttoxeter had hired out their horses to transport the artillery. The Royalists could not advance easily until the enemy's flanks were clear. Footsoldiers were sent against the dragoons and were successful when given some cavalry support. This left the way open for a Royalist cavalry charge which proved highly successful until Sir John Gell organised his retreating men into a square with pikes outwards and musketeers behind them. They resisted successfully until the tired cavalry withdrew. Their major success had been to slay the Royalist cavalry leader, the Earl of Northampton. Gell and his fellow commander, Sir William Bereton, retreated by night to Uttoxeter. The Royalists had saved Stafford but lost a commander. The Parliamentarians had lost about 100 men but had done well with fairly raw troops, two-thirds of whom were infantry.

During 1643 and 1644 Uttoxeter was right in the thick of things. The Parliamentarians controlled much of the country north of Derby and were powerful in Warwickshire and Leicestershire to the south. The King had control of Shropshire and Worcester to the west and Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire to the east. So both sides wanted Uttoxeter and the surrounding area. It was a corridor for the King and a target for the Parliamentarians to consolidate their holdings. This accounts for the number of times troops of both sides passed through the town. Here is a list:

P	March	1643 Sir John Gell after Hopton Heath	
R	Summer	1643 Henry Hastings entertained	P = Parliamentarians
R		1643 Charles I – bells pealed	R = Royalists
P		1644 Gell – wanted guides	
R	April	1644 Hastings	
R	May	1644 Lord Goring – arrested the constable	
R	Whitsun	1645 Charles I – on way to Tutbury	
P		1645 Base for attack on Tutbury	
R		1645 Failure of attack on Tutbury	
P	Oct.	1645 Barricades at the ends of the town.	

It would be erroneous to talk of the town changing hands. It does not appear to have been held by either side or desired by either as a prize. It was a useful provisioning post and overnight stop but it had no military or political significance. It is therefore idle to talk of the town being either Royalist or Parliamentarian. It was a community striving to survive in difficult circumstances. The divisions over the enclosure of the High Wood have suggested that one would be mistaken to talk of the town as a single unit. The same applies to the Civil War. While James Wood was happy to entertain the King, he is still recorded as a Presbyterian. Equally, Thomas Lightfoot was not slow to ally himself with the puritan faction in the church, but he does not seem to have suffered for his party line. The English Civil War involved relatively few people in the population. For those who did not fight or who did not have estates to lose, there was a lot to be said for keeping your head down and trying not to arouse the anger of either side.

In May 1646 Charles I surrendered himself to the Scots and he appeared defeated. However, things flared up again in 1648. On 26th December, 1647 Charles made a secret treaty with the Scots, "The Engagement." By this he agreed to end episcopacy in Scotland and to restore Presbyterianism, if the Scots came to his aid. So it was that on 25th July the Duke of Hamilton led a Scottish army into England. The Duke was no great soldier, as had been shown by his inability to defeat Montrose in Scotland, but he posed a threat to the Parliamentarians. Cromwell led the force against the Duke and defeated him soundly at the battle of Preston Pans from August 17th to August 20th. The Scots continued to advance but they were a beaten army. The foot soldiers reached Warwick but about 3500 horsemen surrendered at Uttoxeter on 25th August. The town was surrounded by General Lambert and Lord Grey of Groby and they attacked the Scots from each end. The invaders soon capitulated. It was a major triumph for the Parliamentarian army as they took the surrender of the Duke, seven colonels, three lieutenant colonels, twenty captains, a hundred other officers and about 3500 men. The prisoners were lodged in Uttoxeter and Bramshall churches among other places. Much damage resulted. In Uttoxeter the wooden floor was ripped up, the windows broken and the place left extremely filthy.

The trial and execution of Charles I followed this last throw on his part and for eleven years, from 1649 to 1660, England became a republic. During this period Uttoxeter spent 1s (5p) on proclaiming Oliver Cromwell Lord Protector. When Charles II was recalled from exile and the monarchy restored, the town spent 5s (25p) on the proclamation. At the time of his coronation 8s (40p) were expended in the town. It is not worth making anything of the disparity in the amounts, what is important is that the town was happy to keep the peace. In those days of poor communications and slow travel, the government in London was very distant. Local inhabitants looked after a lot of their own affairs and were happy to conform to any government in London as long as by doing so they could carry on locally as before.

At the local level the ferment of the Civil War brought more changes in religious affairs than in any other sphere. From 1617 to 1653 the vicar of Uttoxeter was Thomas Lightfoot. He had been curate at Fenton before arriving in the town. His wife was a Bagnall from near Stoke. He had five sons. The eldest, Thomas, became a tradesman in Uttoxeter. John became a Doctor of Divinity, leading Hebrew scholar and Master of St. Catherine's, Cambridge. He was patronised by Sir Rowland Cotton who had land in Uttoxeter. The third son, Peter, we have already encountered as author of the 1658 survey and an opponent of the grazing interest in the 1630's,

Josiah was curate of Ashley for forty-five years, his brother John being the rector. The youngest, Samuel, died young and in holy orders after graduating from Christ's, Cambridge.

Thomas was a man of presbyterian sympathies. Such views could only be sharpened in the 1630's by the visitations of Archbishop Laud's officials and the appointment in 1632 of Robert Wright as Bishop of Lichfield. The visitations were to ensure good discipline, which meant a conformity to Laud's high church ideas, while the Bishop was such a supporter of Laud that he was put in the Tower of London from December 1641 to February 1642. In 1635 Sir Nathaniel Bent visited Staffordshire as Laud's vicar-general. He found the clergy poor and the churches in bad repair. His report on Uttoxeter is unusual; "the walls of the chancel were almost quite covered with verses made by one Mr. Archbold . . . in commendation of various learned divines whom he hath heard preach in that church, which I ordered to be wiped out and divine sentences of Scripture to be put in their place, whereat the old gentleman was much offended." (15) There is no mention of Lightfoot but he came to the fore after presbyterianism had become acceptable with the Civil War. In 1648 a group of 36 ministers and 2 schoolmasters in the county signed a "Testimony." Lightfoot was a signatory. The document expressed agreement with the views of the presbyterian Westminster Assembly in which Lightfoot's son John had sat. However, no subsequent attempt was made to organise the county along presbyterian lines.

Yet Lightfoot was not radical enough for everyone in Uttoxeter. In 1648 he appointed Mr. Henning as his curate. In the following year a violent theological controversy broke out in the town. Henning wrote an attack on the ordinances of the church and called the sacrament, "a communion of dogs and devils; a rotten two-penny communion." He also said that he could prove that Judas did not take it. If his opponents believed that Judas did, then they could go and do as he had done and hang themselves. A member of the Lightfoot family drew up some notes on the subject. Redfern suggested that it was Peter but Torrance favours the learned brother, John. These notes fell into Henning's hands and he replied with another pamphlet; "Judas Excommunicated; or a Vindication of the Communion of Saints," which abused Lightfoot. The Lightfoot reply was a 52 page pamphlet entitled, "A Battle with a Wasp's Nest." This was a very able answer to the theological views and abuse of Henning. Although this was probably written by Dr. John, it does not appear with his name as author. He was a careerist and did not wish to appear as an opponent of religious radicalism for the sake of a local argument. Henning was a radical in the anabaptist tradition, seeing Uttoxeter as a place of Babylonish darkness. The Lightfoot pamphlet says that since Henning came to the town, it has been "torn in pieces with dissensions." (16)

These religious divisions were to continue after the end of the Civil War. The toleration of sectaries during the 1650's led to their firm establishment and made conformity to one church of England after 1660 impossible. The government and Parliament of the 1660's tried to re-establish the idea of one church in the land and persecuted dissent but all to no avail. During the 1650's Quaker missionaries had been active in the county and Uttoxeter was a centre. In 1662 a warrant for the apprehension of Quakers is to be found in the parish records. But they managed to establish their meeting house in Carter Street and in 1672 Uttoxeter was one of the seven places in the county with Quaker meetings. They used an ordinary house until 1703 when the decision was made to build what we know as their Carter Street meeting house. This was completed by 1706 at a cost of £51-13s-9d (£51.69). (17)

A survey of the gentry in the county in 1662-3 revealed that nearly thirty were Presbyterian, three Baptist and one a Quaker. Among ordinary folk the Civil War left a heritage. Demobilised Parliamentary soldiers often carried their dissenting faiths back into their local communities. In 1663-4 Sir Bryan Broughton reported that there were forty-nine ex-soldiers in Uttoxeter with 'Independent' ideas. (18) The Independents were the forerunners of the Congregationalists. The presence of these ex-soldiers helps to explain an incident of the 1660's. A prominent independent preacher Constant, came to Uttoxeter to lecture but was not allowed to do so in the town. He had to lecture in Thorny Lane near Uttoxeter. From this we may assume that the independents were tolerated but the town's citizens were unwilling to see the law against such lectures broken and the religious equilibrium of the town disturbed.

In 1668 the churchwardens of Uttoxeter reported that there were eighteen "sectaries" in the town. This sort of figure is confirmed by the religious census conducted by Bishop Henry Compton of London and taken in 1676. This document is incomplete and inaccurate but interesting insofar as it gives us a rough idea of parish size and the numbers of Roman Catholics and nonconformists. For Uttoxeter it shows 1963 people as belonging to the parish church, 5 Roman Catholics and 32 non-conformists. These seem unexceptional figures. Abbots Bromley had 31 non-conformists, Tutbury 25, Burton 69 and Stafford 155. Nonconformist sects had established footholds all over the county. After the Declaration of Indulgence by Charles II in 1672, 68 places in Staffordshire were granted licences as meeting houses for nonconformist groups. But nowhere were they a serious challenge to the prestige and authority of the established church. The vast expansion in nonconformity was a nineteenth century phenomenon. This can be seen from the following table of meeting places registered in the county after the Toleration Act of 1689 which relieved dissenters of civil penalties :

1689-1750	95	
1750-1800	97	
1800-1850	874	(19)

Bishop Hackett of Lichfield acted strongly against dissenters in the diocese in the 1660's. In a visitation of 1668 he dealt with 199 offenders, excommunicating 111. Yet there seem to have been no major problems for the vicars of Uttoxeter in this period, even though they seem unlikely champions of the established church. Lightfoot, as we saw, was a known Presbyterian but died in 1653 while such ideas were still acceptable. He was succeeded by his curate Lawrence Dawson. He was a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge and may well have been the master of Alleyne's School at the same time as he was curate and vicar. He only stayed in the job until 1658. Then he resigned to become Rector of Bramshall, just outside Uttoxeter. He held that living until his death in 1674, without disturbance. It is surely unlikely that Lightfoot would have a curate whose views did not reasonably accord with his own, particularly after the Henning fiasco? Thus we may think of Dawson as a possible presbyterian yet he went untroubled at the Restoration. His successor at Uttoxeter was also a known presbyterian. Michael Edge held the living from 1658 to 1682. In his first year in office he had been in correspondence with Richard Baxter about the possibility of forming a local association of ministers like Baxter's Worcester Association. (20) Baxter was not a man of extreme views but an important religious thinker. He was offered a bishopric by Charles II in 1660 but left the Church of England in 1662 to work for those who could not accept the new Prayer Book. By corresponding with Baxter, Edge shows himself to be a puritan but not an extremist. He was succeeded in 1682 by Richard Jackson who held the living until 1725.

The living of Uttoxeter, carrying as it did responsibility for the religious welfare of a town of over three thousand people, was not well endowed. Under Thomas Lightfoot it had been worth £30 a year which was augmented by £25 from the rectory on 10th September, 1646. By 1659 the value of the living had slumped to less than £20 and so Michael Edge got an augmentation of £70. (21) These additions were, of course, withdrawn after the Restoration and the vicar had to rely on the smaller tithes and a fixed amount from the rectors, the Dean and Chapter of St. George's, Windsor.

The seventeenth century was a period of expansion for the town of Uttoxeter. The population grew and so did the market. Farming locally began to be predominantly dairy and butter and cheese production became important. The town got control of its own affairs from the Duchy of Lancaster by purchasing the lordship of the manor. Increased grazing was secured by the conversion of a large area of old forest land to common. A healthy independence of spirit that had helped to secure these rights was also manifested in the formation of small dissenting groups within the town while some individuals showed their piety and their wealth by a wide range of charitable bequests. Even such a disaster as the fire of 1672, which destroyed much of the lower part of the town, could be turned to good effect. It allowed citizens to build new and improved homes in keeping with the expanding prosperity of the town.

#### NOTES :

- ( 1 ) All this information was compiled from the parish registers held by St. Mary's, Uttoxeter. The figures for 1960-70 are from Whitaker's Almanack (1973) p.600
- ( 2 ) Hearth Tax, Totmansklow Hundred S.H.C. (1925) pp. 210-19
- ( 3 ) The Gentry of Staffordshire 1662-3 S.H.C. 4th series II (1958) p.35
- ( 4 ) Obligatory Knighthood temp Charles I S.H.C. part 2 (1881) pp.13-18
- ( 5 ) W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern part IV (n.d.) p.32
- ( 6 ) For a full discussion see Seventeenth Century Uttoxeter ed. R.A. Lewis (1975) pp. 14-17
- ( 7 ) Torrance: Following Redfern part V pp. 16-18
- ( 8 ) W.G. Torrance was responsible for our full knowledge of the two surveys. The Lightfoot survey is held by the parish church.
- ( 9 ) Seventeenth Century Uttoxeter p.4
- (10) North Staffordshire Transport and Communications in the Eighteenth Century S.H.C. (1934) p.27
- (11) F. Redfern: History of Uttoxeter (1865) pp. 77,82,85,86,88
- (12) Staffordshire and the Great Rebellion ed. D. Johnson and D.G. Vaisey (1964) p.38
- (13) Seventeenth Century Uttoxeter p.25 and S.H.C. XV (1894) p.217
- (14) Seventeenth Century Uttoxeter p.22-3, Torrance: Following Redfern part IV pp. 15-21, Redfern: Uttoxeter pp. 68-70 and V.C.H. II ed. M.W. Greenslade and J. Jenkins (1967) p.352
- (15) V.C.H. III ed. M.W. Greenslade (1970) pp.56-7
- (16) Redfern: Uttoxeter pp.156-8 and Torrance: Following Redfern part II p.39
- (17) Torrance: Following Redfern part VI p.21-2
- (18) Torrance: Following Redfern part IV p.3
- (19) M.W. Greenslade & D.G. Stuart: A History of Staffordshire (1965) p.32
- (20) A.G. Matthews: The Congregational Churches of Staffordshire (1925) p.28
- (21) Staffordshire Incumbents and Parochial Records 1530-1680 S.H.C. (1915) p.297

## CHAPTER 6 — Stability and Change (1700–1815)

The title of this chapter suggests the peculiar paradox of the eighteenth century in English history. On the one hand we have the world of the established gentry with their houses of varying sizes in the country and their refined tastes. The novels of Jane Austen, which were written during the wars with France in the early 1800's, may serve to stand for this world, stretching back a hundred years. Of course not all gentry were like this. We only have to read 'Tom Jones' by Henry Fielding to see a coarser world entirely. But both books deal with a stable, hierarchical, agricultural society. On the other hand, the eighteenth century was one of dynamic change, laying the foundations for Britain's great economic power of the Victorian era. To the economic historian it was a period of revolutions in agriculture, transport and industry. To the historian of the 19th and 20th centuries, it was the beginning of modern times, the necessary start for all the industrialisation and urbanisation that is so much a feature of our own day.

What was life actually like in Uttoxeter during this eighteenth century? It was still hard. Life expectancy at birth was probably under forty years and major epidemics could still have devastating effects on the population. A few people may have been well-off, but for the vast majority it was hard to make more than just enough. With no kind of assistance available, except for the truly destitute, people had to look after themselves. Brick built housing was becoming more common but housing conditions generally were very poor. Hygiene was a constant problem with no adequate sewerage and water drawn from a pump, that could get contaminated quite easily. Skin diseases were common in all classes and still there was little washing. Lice and fleas were common. Virtually everyone stank, to some degree. Clothes were few and of wool. Cheap cotton clothes were a Victorian advance. The daily routine was regulated by the seasons. With only candles for lighting, people went to bed earlier in the winter months and the streets were uncomfortably dark. It was no good for a poor person to turn to crime, as punishment was so severe. Stealing any substantial item could mean hanging while lesser offenders could face transportation for seven years. Hours of work were long and unregulated. Trades unions had yet to be organised. Commonly people worked twelve hours a day for six days a week. Most children would be at work by the age of eight and were expected to have the work discipline which we now associate with adults.

Although living conditions were still poor, people survived. In the eighteenth century the general population of the country began to climb and it did so also in Uttoxeter. The Hearth Tax of 1666 suggested a population of about 3800. By the early nineteenth century it had risen to about 4800. The census of 1801 had only given a figure of 2779 but that compilation is known to have been incomplete. The figure in the 1811 census is 605 houses and so to find the population we have to use a multiplier. That obviously causes problems in reaching an accurate figure. The 1831 census figure is 4864 and thereafter in the nineteenth century the figures follow a gradual upward trend. The 1801 figure of 2779 must be wrong and the evidence of the parish registers confirms this.

In the eighteenth century the figures for baptisms rise steadily until 1780 but fall thereafter. This is probably an important point. The real surge in population so necessary for the expansion of industrial production came during the eighteenth century. By 1800 the figure for baptisms is still roughly the same as it had been over 50 years before but the bulge was over :

*Number of Baptisms per annum (based on 5 year averages)*

1701–05	101.2	1731–35	113.8	1766–70	111.2
1706–10	85.4	1736–40	96.4	1771–75	122.8
1711–15	81.4	1741–45	97.8	1776–80	136.8
1716–20	100.4	1746–50	103.6	1781–85	125.6
1721–25	97.6	1751–55	95.0	1786–90	122.8
1726–30	97.2	1756–60	96.4	1791–95	104.4
		1761–65	111.2	1796–1800	105.6

The argument among historians of the industrial revolution on population is whether the population rose because the birth rate increased or the death rate fell. The evidence of Uttoxeter on baptisms suggests that the birth rate did rise, at least until 1780. The death rate, as evidenced by the number of burials, is harder to determine. Here are the figures for the eighteenth century based on five year averages :

1701–05	73.6	1736–40	78.6	1771–75	81.4
1706–10	69.0	1741–45	91.8	1776–80	88.4
1711–15	68.6	1746–50	69.6	1781–85	81.6
1716–20	80.6	1751–55	69.2	1786–90	90.2
1721–25	83.6	1756–60	74.0	1791–95	76.4
1726–30	140.0	1761–65	89.0	1796–1800	72.6
1731–35	76.8	1766–70	91.4		

The period from 1726 to 1730 was obviously exceptional and will be dealt with later. For the rest of the century the figures are remarkably even. They are at a higher level generally than in the seventeenth century but, considering the rise in the number of baptisms, suggest a decline in the death rate. Further evidence for this may be found in comparing the figures for baptisms and burials and thus calculating the net increase or decrease in the town's population.

*Number of Baptisms minus the number of burials*

1701–10	+ 220	1761–70	+ 210
1711–20	+ 165	1771–80	+ 449
1721–30	–144	1781–90	+ 383
1731–40	+ 274	1791–1800	+ 305
1741–50	+ 200	1801–10	+ 358
1751–60	+ 241	TOTAL	+2661

Although one may think of Uttoxeter as an "unmigratory town" (Redfern) there must have been considerable movement away from the town in the eighteenth century. If we accept that the total population rose by about 1000 from 1660 to 1830 then there must have been migration in this century. Some of it may have been to the country-side around, but most was probably to such burgeoning industrial areas as the Potteries or Arkwright's mills at Cromford.

This is not, however, reflected in calculations about family size. If people migrated to get work then you would expect family size to be quite large to account for the rise in the number of baptisms and to offset young people of marriageable age leaving the town. Using the same method as in the previous chapter for determining the number of children per family, the results are variable but show no special rises or falls in line with baptisms. In fact, the period of the greatest increase in baptisms (1760–80) coincides with a fall in the calculations for children per family.

*Number of children*

1701–30	3½ to 4
1730–55	4½ to 5
1760–75	4
1780–1800	4½

As for the number of baptisms, marriages and burials in each month the figures are much the same as for the previous century.

*Burials per month during the Eighteenth Century*

Jan.	8.16	April	7.71	July	5.66	Oct.	5.96
Feb.	7.42	May	7.47	Aug.	5.80	Nov.	6.73
March	8.21	June	6.66	Sept.	5.45	Dec.	6.77

The main peak for burials still comes in the early months of the year. The figures have risen generally but more importantly the contrast between the best and worst months is greater than in the seventeenth century.

*Baptisms per month during the Eighteenth Century*

Jan.	9.90	April	9.83	July	8.37	Oct.	8.53
Feb.	9.55	May	8.85	Aug.	6.43	Nov.	8.65
March	9.70	June	8.49	Sept.	8.47	Dec.	7.58

The trend in baptisms is again the same, with most babies being conceived between April and July. The figure for August may be a distortion caused by the clergy wishing to take their holidays. Otherwise there seems to be no explanation which we can trace for such a dip in the figures.

*Marriages per month during the Eighteenth Century*

Jan.	2.43	April	2.40	July	1.71	Oct.	2.10
Feb.	2.44	May	2.31	Aug.	1.56	Nov.	1.90
March	1.07	June	2.04	Sept.	2.41	Dec.	2.45

Once again the number of marriages in March is low because of Lent. However the antagonism to marriages in Advent seems to have ended. As can be seen from the figures above, December, January and February had become the most popular time of the year in which to get married.

As far as exceptional periods were concerned, they were all to do with burials in the eighteenth century. There were a few bad months in 1705, late 1713, 1722, early 1728, 1732, 1741, 1743, 1749, 1754, early 1763, July 1769 to March 1770, summer 1775 and early 1776. In all these cases we are talking of a few months with higher than average figures but the period from August 1728 to July 1730 suggests either a series of epidemics or a lingering infectious disease such as smallpox.

1728												1729												1730											
Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.			
16	17	12	11	12	13	10	10	22	20	16	8	9	7	13	15	23	10	13																	
1730												1730												1730											
Mar.												Mar.												Mar.											
Apr.												Apr.												Apr.											
May												May												May											
June												June												June											
July												July												July											
14												14												14											
21												36												36											
37												37												37											
15												15												15											

The ten year average for the 1720's is 111. 8 burials a year, which would give a total of 223.6 for this span of time. The figures above total 380. The parish registers give no indication of what might have caused this. As these high figures lasted for such a

long time we are probably right in attributing them to a disease such as smallpox. This may not have killed many of the people, but it would have had the effect of lessening their capacity to resist other diseases which were prevalent at the time, particularly when we remember the poor state of medicine of the time. (1)

Of the social structure of the population we know little. Uttoxeter was certainly no gentry town. In a directory of 1793 which lists gentlemen, gentlewomen and clergy, the figures are, respectively, 20, 5 and 4. An 1818 directory has figures of 17, 13 and 4 for the same groups. Out of a population of four and a half thousand, this represents under 4%, if families are included. However, the number of tradesmen is high and the trades in which they were engaged very varied. The totals for tradesmen in 1793 and 1818 are 166 and 302. In the latter total there are some duplications but we are here talking of tradesmen and their families as representing 25% to 40% of the town's population. (2) Uttoxeter at this period was a town with over 8000 acres and so there was plenty of land outside the town but within the parish.

The directories used for calculating the number of tradesmen are also interesting because they show us the variety of trades pursued in the town. The following list is taken from the 1793 directory :

baker	cork cutter	joiner	saddler
banker	cotton factor	lawyer	shoemaker
basket maker	currier	leather-cutter	skinner
black-worker	cutler	linen draper	smith
bookseller	dyer	liquor merchant	Staffordshire ware seller
brazier	farmer	maltster	staymaker
builder	flour dealer	mantua worker	tailor
butcher	gardener	mason	tallow chandler
cabinet-maker	grocer	mercer	tanner
carver	hairdresser	milliner	tea dealer
chair maker	hardwareman	patten maker	timber merchant
cheese factor	hatter	pawnbroker	victualler
clock and watch maker	hoopmaker	physician	weaver
confectioner	huckster	plumber	woolcomber
cooper	jeweller	printer	woolfactor
		*	woolstapler

To these sixty trades the 1818 General and Commercial directory adds :

architect	fellmonger	nail and chain maker	straw hat maker
auctioneer	fire offices	oil thong maker	thread manufacturer
boat builder	fruiterer	painter	upholsterer
brewer	furniture broker	rope and twine maker	veterinary surgeon
bricklayer	glass and china seller	rennet dealer	wheelwright
brushmaker	iron merchants	salt merchant	whipcord maker
chemist	land surveyor	silversmith	whitesmith
coal proprietor	lime master	slate merchant	

This gives a total of over ninety different manufacturing or commercial activities going on in a small town of about 4500 people. This is surely a very high figure. It is due to the continued importance of Uttoxeter as a market town. It was the commercial centre for the surrounding area and so had to supply all the demands of that area.



**IVY BANK HOUSE**

As people began to realise the possibilities of larger scale manufacture, merchants or factors sprang up to sell their products. It became possible to buy manufactured products at as cheap a price as it would have cost to make them oneself. This development was a feature of the industrial revolution of the late eighteenth century and gives point to Napoleon Bonaparte's jibe that "England is a nation of shopkeepers."

To supply an expanding market it was necessary to improve transport. Roads, which were the responsibility of the parishes through which they passed, were often poorly maintained. No manufacturer would willingly send breakable goods any distance by such roads. To give some idea of the speed at which goods had to travel on such poor roads, take the example of John Ward, a carrier from Uttoxeter, in 1781. He travelled from Uttoxeter to Cheapside, a journey of about 135 miles. He left the Bell Inn at 10 a.m. on a Monday or Thursday to arrive on the Saturday or Wednesday following. In each case this makes the journey six days long or about 25 miles a day. For an individual there was always coach travel. Coaches though only carried six or eight people. Their speed depended very much on the season, in winter it might be only 30 miles a day but double that in summer. Also, the cost was high. In 1744 the fare from Lichfield to London was 27s (£1.35) and you had to add to this shillings for the coachman. You were also expected to buy the coachman's drinks. (3) Travel was, therefore, only indulged in when necessary. However, there must have been a demand for three times a week in 1793 coaches passed through Uttoxeter on their way to Birmingham, twice a week for Newcastle-under-Lyme and for Derby. By 1818 there were daily coaches from the White Hart to London and Liverpool, Manchester and Birmingham. You could by then go to Derby and Newcastle-under-Lyme three times a week. From the Red Lion there was a thrice weekly service to Sheffield and to Birmingham. (4)

One of the reasons for increased road travel was the introduction of turnpike roads. If a parish was finding it difficult to maintain a road, then some enterprising citizens might lay a bill before Parliament to form a turnpike. If this was passed then a trust or company was formed to put the road into good repair and keep it so. For doing this, the trust could charge tolls. To make sure that trade was not impeded by such tolls, there were often agreements reached with local traders and manufacturers to exclude them from payment. In 1759 the Newcastle to Derby road, via Uttoxeter, was turnpiked as was the Lichfield to Ashbourne road through Uttoxeter, a little later. Thus Uttoxeter had both a north-south and an east-west road that were of good quality and well-maintained. Later in the century the road to Stone became a turnpike. The toll houses for collecting dues still exist in many places. The house at the corner where the road from Marchington divides into Leighton Road and Highwood Road coming into the town is one such survival.

For the transport of goods the turnpike roads were often inadequate. Unless a whole journey could be made on such roads, delicate goods stood every chance of arriving in an unsaleable condition. Also the tolls made turnpike roads too expensive for transporting bulk goods. The tolls were based first on the number of horses pulling and later on wheel width but, in either case, they worked out very expensive for cheap but heavy goods. The solution to the problem was found in the development of canals. Water had always been the method of transport best suited to bulk goods such as coal, but canals allowed new possible industrial sites to be linked with their markets. The great growth of canals was in the period 1770 to 1790. With the Staffordshire and Worcester canal, the Grand Trunk canal and the Birmingham canal, the three major estuaries of the Humber, Severn and Mersey were linked. The whole nation became the possible market for the hardware man of Birmingham or the pottery maker of Stoke.

In north Staffordshire the proprietors of the Grand Trunk or Trent and Mersey canal built the Cauldon canal in 1777 to link their main canal with the limestone quarries. During the mania for canals in the 1790's, it was decided to extend this Cauldon canal, first to Leek and then, by an act of 6th June, 1797, to Uttoxeter. This new branch was to run from Froghall to Uttoxeter, a distance of thirteen and a quarter miles. The tolls were to be 1½d per ton per mile and it was hoped that the canal could supply the town with coal from Cheadle, copper and brass from Oakamoor and Alton and lime. With our knowledge of the rapid development of railways forty years later it may seem to have been a poor investment, but at the time it represented a major advance for Uttoxeter. With this canal link the town could expand its manufacturing potential.

The whole idea was opposed by the Earl of Shrewsbury. He owned the Alton Wire Mill, while the Cheadle Brass Company was leased from him. He saw the canal as diverting his necessary water supply. This must have had an effect for in May 1800 the Staffordshire Advertiser was inviting contractors for a railway. In October 1802 a new act was passed which allowed for an alteration in the course of the proposed canal near Alton Mill. Work began on the canal in 1807 and Oakamoor was reached in August 1808. The canal began to edge towards Alton. Finally, on 13th March, 1809 an agreement was signed with the Alton Wire Mill and Alton itself was reached in May. However, by this time money was beginning to run out and a new act of 20th May, 1809 authorised the raising of an additional £40,000 to finish the job. On 3rd September 1811 it reached Uttoxeter and there was great rejoicing, "with every demonstration of joy which the inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood could desire." (5) There was a procession of boats from the town to the Churnet crossing returning at 5 p.m. Bonfires were lit and there was a sheep roast plus bread and ale. One hundred and fifty were invited to the more select cold collation. Its terminus in Uttoxeter was where the High Street divides into the Cheadle Road and Park Street, still called the Wharf.

The eighteenth century saw improvements in agriculture as well as in industry and transport. Advances were made in animal husbandry following the improved breeding by Robert Bakewell, while new rotations improved yields from arable land. In the area around Uttoxeter dairying was still the main use of land but a certain amount of corn was also grown. This was partly due to a new rotation for heavy soils — 'Midland Grass.' By this, land which had been used for grass for six or seven years was changed to oats, wheat or barley instead of remaining as permanent pasture. Uttoxeter remained a major animal market both for cattle and sheep. There were also major fairs held, in 1798, on 6th May, 31st July, 1st and 19th September. We can get some idea of the size of the market by the following details of what property was held by the clerk:

24 tilted stalls	128 boards (five feet)	200 forks and poles
45 trestles	48 feet of other boards	20 hurdles for sheep
40 boards (6 feet)	30 feet of ash boards	Measures and a bell. (6)

In today's market the Johnson memorial is a prominent feature. The story of his penance is well known but deserves re-telling. Dr. Samuel Johnson was a poet, critic, lexicographer and conversationalist whose life was recorded so well by James Boswell that he remains a prominent historical and literary figure while others with no such biographer are forgotten. His father, Michael, was a bookseller in Lichfield who also travelled to Uttoxeter market to offer his wares. When Samuel was in his late teens he

was learning the business. One Wednesday his father was unwell and asked Samuel to go to Uttoxeter to man his stall. The son refused. This troubled the eminent Doctor in later life for he was a high churchman with the highest moral standards. Thus in 1784 (that is the accepted date), when staying with Miss Seward at Lichfield, he decided to mark the fiftieth anniversary of his disobedience. He travelled by post-chaise to Uttoxeter and stood bareheaded in penance for half an hour on the spot where his father used to have his stall. Nobody knew that he was going to do this and nobody knows for sure the place at which he stood. The present memorial is supposed to be on the spot and has decoration based on the Lichfield memorial to the Doctor. It was originally designed by Thomas Fradgley in 1854 as a weighing machine as well as a memorial.

During the eighteenth century Uttoxeter had its own native poet. He lived in the house now occupied by Allport's, the jewellers. He was Samuel Bentley. Born in Uttoxeter in early May 1722, he lived until early March 1803. He was an accomplished man with independent means, although his family had been hair-dressers. He was educated at the grammar school and by the vicar, George Malbon. This must have been when Bentley was an adult for Malbon was only vicar of Uttoxeter from 1748 to 1768. The poet knew Latin, Greek, Italian and some Hebrew and could play the harpsichord, flute and 'cello. In 1768 he had his 28 verse poem "The River Dove, a Pastoral Lyric" published. Six years later he got 234 subscribers for his collected poems. At the age of 77 in 1799 he was engaged in writing an autobiographical poem despite the fact that since 1774 he had been blind. This occurred when lightning struck him in the face while at home. He lived with his three unmarried sisters who all predeceased him. Here is his poetic evocation of his native town :

Uttoxeter, sweet are thy views!  
Each scene of my fond boyish days,  
Past pleasure in fancy renews,  
While gratitude sings in thy praise;  
Here plenty with copious horn,  
Dispenses her bounty around,  
And rosy thy sons, like the morn,  
In health and in spirits abound.  
  
Thy buildings, what though they are plain  
And boast no magnificent dome,  
Enough for the wise may contain —  
Enjoying true plenty at home;  
How happy thy poor who enjoy  
Possessions o'er want to prevail,  
Whose hills daily bread can supply,  
And sweet milky tribute the vale.      (7)

Another famous man born in Uttoxeter was Admiral Lord Gardner. Born in 1742 he left the town in 1756 to become a midshipman. He rose high in the navy but was never a great commander. In fact the local histories which tell his story are extremely uncritical of his actual role in major naval events, such as the 1797 mutiny at Portsmouth. Instead they prefer to detail his commands and promotions. Also, as an adult he had no real connection with the town at all. (8)

In a small way, some of the major political events of the eighteenth century may be glimpsed through events in Uttoxeter. Following the death of Queen Anne in 1714,

George, Elector of Hanover succeeded to the British throne as George I. There were quite strong feelings against this for James II's son still lived. In 1715 there was the first Jacobite rising against the Hanoverians. This was used as an excuse in some parts of Staffordshire for attacking nonconformist meeting houses. The supporters of the Old Pretender were high church Anglicans as well as Jacobites. The government paid out £1722-2s-6d (£1722.13) in compensation to Staffordshire (one third of the national total). The presbyterian meeting house in Uttoxeter was damaged to the tune of £37-11s (£37.55). (9)

In 1745 the Jacobite threat re-appeared with the landing in Scotland of 'Bonnie Prince Charlie' in an attempt to usurp the throne for his father, the Old Pretender. He marched triumphantly through Scotland gathering a force of about 6000 men. However, the journey to London was long and he began to lose men once he entered England and there were few local recruits to replace them. The Hanoverian response was efficient. Wade had one army in Yorkshire, George II's son Cumberland gathered another between Tamworth and Stafford while the King was organising a third at Finchley if all else failed. Cumberland's main problem as the Stuart prince advanced was to predict the line of his advance. When Bonnie Prince Charlie split his army into two columns on reaching the Peak District, Cumberland moved to Stone fearing that one group of the invaders would go to Wales. As it was, Lord George Murray and the Prince met up at Ashbourne, the Prince having decided to retreat on reaching Derby on 4th December, being faced with his men wanting to go home. His army was no match for the Duke of Cumberland who had about 10,000 infantry and over 2000 cavalry. In his pursuit of the Prince, Cumberland passed through Uttoxeter, staying two nights at the house of the Gardner family, usually then called Uttoxeter House. Of course, he went on to pursue the rebels northwards and finally defeat them at Culloden early in 1746.

The military were again called for in the 1790's when the French Revolutionary Wars began. The French Revolution of 1789 had had a profound effect on Britain, encouraging radicals and frightening the more conservative. The execution of Louis XVI of France caused even greater fear among the establishment that republicanism might spread across the channel and the events of the 1640's be repeated. A curate of Uttoxeter, Rev. Richard Palmer, wrote an essay in favour of monarchy and against republicanism in 1793. To deter unrest the Staffordshire militia was called out in 1793 although it had been disbanded ten years before. In 1803 it was joined by eight troops of volunteer cavalry raised locally, making a total force of 1090 men. Uttoxeter was one of the centres for raising troops. In 1798 a call was made for subscriptions to a patriotic fund to support the government. Uttoxeter raised £112-8s (£112.40), which contrasts well with Abbots Bromley (£32-10s-6d) but not with Cheadle (£217). (10) Fortunately for the local militia Napoleon's plans to invade England never materialised.

During the whole of the eighteenth century the Church of England was one of the main bastions of the establishment. Although the Wesleys urged on the church an evangelical crusade to the ordinary man, they were unsuccessful in influencing more than a few clergymen. Clerical life was a career for a gentleman and many beneficed clergy were as prominent on the sessions' bench as in their pulpits. In Uttoxeter the vicar was one of the town's leading citizens. With much power being in the hands of the Vestry meeting which voted for churchwardens and other parish officials, the vicar was inevitably an influential man. His tenure of office was for life unless he cared to resign his benefice. Churchwardens in Uttoxeter on the other hand, did not hold office for long.

In the seventeenth century it had been normal for a man to serve for two years, thus creating one vacancy a year. In the eighteenth century men only served for a year. Both were replaced annually. (11) During the period covered by this chapter, four vicars served for twenty years or more: Henry Cotton, George Malbon, Athanasius Herring and Whittington Landon.

If you look at the Bishops of Lichfield of the years after 1750 it is easy to see why the church would not follow Wesley's example but continued to see itself as upholding the status quo. From 1750 to 1768 the Bishop was the younger son of Lord Cornwallis. The Bishop for the next three years was the son of a bishop. His mother was the daughter of the Earl of Portland. From 1771 to 1774 the Bishop was a half-brother of the leading government minister, Lord North, while his successor, although a poor scholar and native of Staffordshire, was a favourite of the King. Bishop after 1781 was another Cornwallis, third son of the first Earl. He even moved away from the diocese to Richmond in Surrey when he found that a turnpike had been opened past the gates of his palace at Eccleshall. (12).

While the established church seemed unable to come to terms with the religious aspirations of the working and trading classes, the nonconformist groups adjusted to changed circumstances. In Uttoxeter there had been independents or congregationalists since the time of the Civil War. They begin to appear as an organised group towards the end of the eighteenth century. The house of George Green was registered for their meetings in 1771 and in 1792 they acquired the use of the yard adjoining Bear Hill. (13) This caused some local anger and the opening heralded a riot in the street and a bonfire at which the minister was burned in effigy. Brands from the fire were even hurled at people returning from the meeting.

Methodism also began to make its mark by 1800. Between 1775 and 1790 itinerant methodist preachers held meetings at Mr. Godbehere's house while between 1775 and 1780 an Anglican curate, Rev. Davenport, opened his house for public prayer meetings of Wesleyans. (14) The first room registered for use by Methodists belonged to Thomas Key. This was in June 1809. In 1813 the house of Samuel Walker was registered for the same purpose although a chapel had been opened in 1812, which still stands proud and classical in the High Street today. (15)

Meanwhile the Quakers had contracted in membership during the eighteenth century. Their meeting house of 1706 was not used for every monthly meeting. These meetings were held alternately in Uttoxeter, Stafford and Leek. Only the preparatory meeting of the day before was always held in the home town. Despite being given recognition as separate, dissenting groups, all nonconformists had to pay tithes to the vicar and rector. In 1755 a Quaker, John Shipley of Uttoxeter, had three heifers worth £11 taken in settlement of three years' tithe payments withheld. (16) However unjust the practice it went on for over a hundred years more before being abolished.

The Presbyterians also declined in Uttoxeter during the eighteenth century. In the early years of the century they used the house of Samuel Bradshaw for their meetings. This property was registered in 1705. In 1718 the same man is called a mercer and his new house is registered for Presbyterian meetings. (17) The 1718 parochial returns to the Bishop note that there were 14 Presbyterian families in Uttoxeter, and we have the names of ministers up to 1760: Joshua-Musel, John Sparry, Daniel Madock, George Buxton and Judah Jagger. (18) However, by 1760, the congregation had declined so greatly that the meeting house was closed.

Nonconformity remained a minority religious conviction. Most people belonged to the established church and we cannot tell how sincere was their belief. Certainly the behavioural strictness of puritanism was declining. There is mention of the theatre in the eighteenth century. One group performed at the Black Swan Inn while another used a room at the Red Lion. It is also at the same time that we hear of horseracing at Uttoxeter. The first mention is of a meeting in the 1720's but not then again until 1774 when an attempt was made to revive the Uttoxeter races. There was a 100 guinea sweepstake for hunters belonging to local farmers. The race was to be run over the High Wood. The next reference is for 1782 when the Birmingham Gazette speaks of an annual two day meeting in September. (19)

The eighteenth century can be seen on the national scale as a time when the old patterns of agricultural society had to face the challenge of a new commercial, industrial and urban society. The old order still held the upper hand in 1815 but it was definitely in retreat. Yet amid all this important change Uttoxeter, like every small market town, had its own minor alterations as well. The bells of the church were recast in 1729 and we first have references to the chimes being rung at 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock. New elegant buildings went up such as the Old Bank House in the High Street, the manor house in Church Street or the Georgian buildings in Balance Street. (20). The last remaining common land was enclosed in 1788 to provide revenue for maintaining the poor. The grammar school gradually declined until it was down to 14 pupils in the early 1800's and taught no classics. To the inhabitants of Uttoxeter these small changes were more noticeable than those general trends which are now so much a part of our historical view of this century.

#### NOTES:

- ( 1) Compiled from the Parish Registers held by St. Mary's, Uttoxeter.
- ( 2) Universal British Directory (1793) vol. 4 pp.651-3 and Staffordshire General and Commercial Directory, Parson and Bradshaw (1818) pp. 258-274 (William Salt Library)
- ( 3) Staffordshire Roads 1700-1840 ed. R.A. Lewis (1975) p.4
- ( 4) Universal and Staffordshire General directories op. cit.
- ( 5) Staffordshire Advertiser 14/9/1811. For the canal generally see C. Hadfield: The Canals of the West Midlands (2nd ed. 1969) pp.200-1, J. Lindsay: The Trent and Mersey Canal (1974) pp.60-3 and W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern (n.d.) part VIII pp. 15-17.
- ( 6) Seventeenth Century Uttoxeter ed. R.A. Lewis (1975) p.18 based on documents SRO D 1733/28 (Staffordshire Record Office).
- ( 7) F. Redfern: History of Uttoxeter (1865) p.3 For Bentley see also Redfern pp. 211-7 and Torrance: Following Redfern part VII pp.23-4
- ( 8) For eulogistic accounts of his life see Redfern: Uttoxeter pp.217-22, Nightingale's History of Staffordshire pp.958-962 and Pitt's History of Staffordshire (1817) pp.213-216
- ( 9) V.C.H. vol. III ed. M.W. Greenslade (1970) p.122-3
- (10) Torrance: Following Redfern part VIII p.15
- (11) There is a framed list of churchwardens available at the back of St. Mary's Church
- (12) V.C.H. vol. III p.69
- (13) The Registrations of Dissenting Chapels and Meeting Houses in Staffordshire 1689-1852 S.H.C. 4th series III (1960) pp.124,134.
- (14) Redfern: Uttoxeter p.200
- (15) Registrations of Chapels pp.18, 28, 30

- (16) M.W. Greenslade and D.G. Stuart: *History of Staffordshire* (1965) p.32
- (17) Registrations of Chapels pp.115, 118
- (18) A.G. Matthews: *The Congregational Churches of Staffordshire* (1925) p.264
- (19) V.C.H. vol. II ed. M.W. Greenslade and J. Jenkins (1967) p.365-6
- (20) N. Pevsner: *Staffordshire* (1974) p.290-1

## CHAPTER 7 – An Age of Confidence (1815–1914)

From the year of the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo to the outbreak of World War One was just a century. During most of that time Britain was one of the greatest powers on the earth. Economically she was only overhauled by the USA and Germany in the early years of this century. Nautically there was truth in that famous misquotation, “Britannia rules the waves.” Dotted all over the globe were coaling stations for Britain’s enormous fleet which was backed up by a navy greater than all those of other nations together in about 1900. On political maps of the late Victorian period pink or red predominated, representing the huge worldwide British Empire of over forty countries. The jewel of that imperial crown was supposed to be India and many of the cream of each generation were sent to toil there. Although one could not claim with any justification that our army was unrivalled, the series of small but successful colonial wars gave an illusion of strength. In both the Crimean War of the 1850’s and the South African War of 1899-1902 the deficiencies of that army had been revealed.

At home the Victorian age appeared to be one of calculated and remorseless progress. Gradually the franchise was extended without the country ever suffering the upheavals of revolution. Working conditions were regularised and trade unions began their struggle to better the lot of the working man. Such vital but overlooked things as water supply and sewerage were organised and made life less of a gamble. Yet the poor were ever there. The investigations of Rowntree in York at the turn of the century revealed as much poverty and deprivation as the less scientific Mayhew had found in London fifty years before. Jobs were as insecure as ever and yet by all accounts the rich became richer and their landownership got greater as we shall see later. Inventions abounded in the late nineteenth century; electric light, telephone, radio and the motor car to name but a few. It was to be anything from thirty to sixty years after 1900 before they became common property.

Uttoxeter shared in all this prosperity and confidence but managed to escape the problems of large scale industry. In 1914 it was still a market town albeit a little bigger and with an industrial base.

We can see that the town did not expand very much by looking at the population figures for Uttoxeter and the county of Staffordshire.

Uttoxeter Population				Population Density in Staffordshire	
1821	4658	1871	4692		
1831	4864	1881	4981		
1841	4735	1891	5477	1750	c.140 per sq. mile
1851	4990	1901	6204	1881	866 per sq. mile
1861	4847	1911	5717	(1)	

Obviously a great deal of the country’s expansion was due to the growth of the Potteries and the Black Country as industrial centres. Despite the fact that Uttoxeter did always have small industries and Bamford’s became a large employer by 1914, the town’s population did not rise dramatically. Even in the period 1881 to 1901 when the increase was of the order of 24.5% it only equals the national rise in population of 25.4%. We have to remember that the previous sixty years tell a different story. From 1821 to 1881 the population of Uttoxeter rose by 5% while in the country as a whole the comparable figure is 116.7%. (2)

It is not always possible to account for small rises and falls in population with any accuracy but there seem to have been special circumstances which may account for the rise in 1851 and the falling back afterwards. Due to the construction of the Churnet Valley railway line, a certain number of navvies had come to the town and remained. It is also said that scarlet fever and diphtheria were epidemic in the town in the 1860's partly due to the pollution of Hockley Brook. However, these are really only speculations.

We do have some idea though of the conditions in which people lived. In the first place they were probably living in overcrowded housing. A survey of 1867 which covered 63 parishes, including part of the Uttoxeter Poor Law Union, found 213 families living in houses with three bedrooms, 1572 families in two bedroom houses and 596 families in houses with only one bedroom. Of this latter group of 596, 212 families had three or more children. (3) Yet in the countryside around Uttoxeter land was increasingly passing into the hands of large landowners during the nineteenth century. In 1873 six peers and two commoners owned 31% of the land in Staffordshire while a further 17% were owned by another twenty six estates. (4)

But what of the social structure of Uttoxeter itself? In the previous chapter the number of tradesmen and types of trade in 1793 and 1818 were detailed. Other directories enable us to do the same sort of thing for 1822-3, 1834, 1841 and 1850, after which we have to rely on Post Office Directories. Here are the figures:

<i>Year</i>	<i>No. of Trades</i>	<i>No. of Tradesmen</i>
1822-3	42	126
1834	60	335
1841	74	331
1850	79	345

It is obvious that the Pigot's Directory figures for 1822-3 are incomplete, for the directory of 1818 had given much greater numbers. There seems a fair amount of uniformity about the later figures. The town was obviously a hive of small scale commerce and industry. The town had fifteen or sixteen tailors whose centre seems to have been Carter Street. Here six of them worked. There were still plenty of taverns, pubs or inns, about twenty six or seven. There were about twenty men listed as boot and shoemakers and a dozen butchers. The number of agents for fire offices grew steadily from five in 1822-3 to seventeen in 1850. The number of lawyers also grew steadily, from five to nine in the same period. Along with the trades and professions which we can still see today, there were some more unusual occupations in Uttoxeter in the early nineteenth century:— hoop bender, stay maker, straw bonnet maker, clog and patten maker and whip and thong maker. (5)

Even with prospering small scale manufacture there were those who were too ill or old to work, the poor and the destitute. During the nineteenth century the care of such people was regularised throughout the country. Uttoxeter had made provision for the poor through charities but in the late eighteenth century this had been improved on. The part of the common owned by the town was enclosed in 1787-8. It comprised 186 acres of the High Wood and 64 acres of the Heath. A body of trustees was appointed to see that the benefit went to relieve the poor and so lower the poor rate. In 1789 a workhouse was built at a cost of £3900 which could take 200 people. When the government passed the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 a system of workhouses sprang up through the land. Each area had a Poor Law Union.

That which was centred on Uttoxeter covered sixty-three square miles and included eighteen parishes. The workhouse was on the Heath, well away from the respectable gaze of the townspeople. Apparently the system worked in the way in which it was intended. The cost was reduced. In Staffordshire the care of the poor in 1833 had cost £133,270. By 1838 the figure had been reduced to £84,038. (6)

There were other areas in which local organisation played its part in bringing change to the town. The outbreaks of scarlet fever and diphtheria in 1861 have already been mentioned. The situation was worst along the Stone Road. This was due to the pollution of Hockley Brook by a tanning yard at the bottom of Pinfold Lane by the railway. It is difficult to see how such pollution could actually affect the incidence of diphtheria as the disease is spread by personal contact or droplets from coughing or sneezing. The parish was at that time responsible for sewerage and water. It employed 'night-soil men' and carts to remove effluent. This system was in use until drains were installed in 1907 at a cost of £20,000. The water for the town came from springs at Bramshall. Water overseers were appointed by the Vestry meeting of the parish. This was the system until 1892 when the town began to use the Kiddlestitch reservoir. Later, as demand from the town grew, the Urban District Council set up its own waterworks.

The mention of the U.D.C. brings us to the biggest change in local government of the nineteenth century. The parish lost its governmental power. The Vestry meeting remained to appoint churchwardens but the old overseers of highways, the poor and water disappeared. By an Act of 1888 County Councils were established which took over major responsibilities. Six years later urban district and rural district councils were established. Those for Uttoxeter were formed in 1896. Councillors were elected and paid local government officials dealt with such things as roads, water and sewerage acting on the policy of the council. The Poor Law Union was run by a Board of Guardians. In Parliament Uttoxeter had to call on the services of one of the county members. There were two such before 1832, four between 1832 and 1867 and six in three divisions between 1867 and 1885. After 1885 the county was split into seven divisions so that the town at least had an M.P. with some territorial loyalty. The centre of that division was, as it is today, Burton-upon-Trent. Unfortunately Uttoxeter would always be overshadowed by its larger neighbour.

During the nineteenth century it was hard for anyone to complain that he could not contact a person, be he an M.P. or a relation. The postal service was very efficient. With the coming of the railways, Rowland Hill's original idea of a penny post could be speeded up so that letters could reach their destinations by the following day. From Uttoxeter the mail was carried nightly to Stafford at 8 p.m. and the return journey made in the early hours. The first delivery was made in the town soon after 6 a.m. For many years the postman was W.H. Lovatt who protected the mail by carrying a cudgel and having a guard dog. (7)

The citizens of the town were also better able to know the business of the town as local newspapers developed. The first was the Uttoxeter New Era. It was begun in 1855 by Mr. Kelly. It was followed in 1882 by the Uttoxeter Advertiser. This was known and still is as "the stunner." Later the two papers amalgamated. Obvious to all the citizens must have been the changing picture of the town presented by its buildings. Old houses of wattle and plaster with ling thatched roofs and gable ends over the street disappeared. Redfern noted this in the first edition of his history in 1865. Certainly there is little of such old building to be seen in the town today.

Many private houses of varying shapes and sizes were built in the Victorian era but the centre of the town also changed.

First the old church was knocked down and rebuilt in 1828-9 (this will be dealt with later). Then in the 1850's Thomas Fradgley stamped his mark on the town. He had already been the architect for the church at Bramshall, which dates from the 1830's, and for that at Stramshall, when this place got a separate church in 1852. But his main work for Uttoxeter was done in 1853-4. The corner stone for the new town hall was laid by Henry Manners, Lord Waterpark on 26th August, 1853 and the building was opened on 29th November, 1854. It was classical in style with a recessed central entrance. It seems to have been an admirably practical building. Beyond the entrance hall and lobby was a main hall large enough for public meetings or magistrates' hearings. The main staircase gave entrance to a gallery round the main hall which further increased its capacity. Also upstairs were a ladies' retiring room, a library room for the Mechanics' Literary Institution and a special members reading room. By the two doors to either side of the main entrance one could enter the police station and a savings bank. The cellars were used for prisoners' cells and storage space for the brewery opposite, whose offices had also been designed by Thomas Fradgley. Up on the first floor on one side were three bedrooms and a sitting room used by the police force. (8)

At the same time as the Town Hall was being planned, Smithfield Market was built. It cost £1500 and was paid for by the proprietors of the tolls. The idea was to release the market area from the problems caused by having hundreds of animals on sale there. The new market could hold 800 cattle, 840 sheep and 225 pigs. Cattle were to arrive by Smithfield Road while sheep and pigs came up the High Street and under the archway at the side of the Town Hall. (9)

Fradgley's other building served a practical as well as an ornamental purpose. The Johnson memorial in the Market Place was also a weighing machine. It has a stone dome and four pediments with scenes from Johnson's life copied in cement from the memorial in Lichfield. It was put up after the American author Nathaniel Hawthorne had visited Uttoxeter and found no one who knew anything about the Johnson penance. The site for the memorial was fixed by Francis Redfern whose pioneering historical work on the town is still of great value.

The market was the focus of Uttoxeter's economic life. Butter was still an important product through the nineteenth century. It was sold with distinctive prints such as a cow, a wheatsheaf or a flower cluster. Cheese was a major dairy product of the area around Uttoxeter for most of the century. Staffordshire cheese had disappeared and it was Cheshire and Derbyshire that was produced. It was sold either directly to cheese factors and thence transported to London or at the weekly markets and seasonal fairs. In Uttoxeter there were five cheese fairs noticed in Pigot's directory of 1822-3 while White's directory of 1834 mentions three cheese fairs to be held on Thursdays in mid-March, early September and mid-November. Cheese was no longer normally sold in a large way at the weekly market and this led to a dispute over tolls in 1857. In March 'The Era' published a letter against tolls on cheese. At the fair in November of that year many refused to pay the tolls. After a public meeting it was decided to call for arbitration. This was done by C.H. Scotland and presented in May 1858. He said that cheese should not pay tolls if sold on the market place on any day other than Wednesday. In other words cheesemakers paid tolls if they sold their product at market but not if they sold it at one of the fairs. Besides the cheese fairs

there were four cattle fairs and a colt fair.

Yet by the end of the century cheese making on farms had declined greatly although dairying remained predominant in the Trent and Dove Valleys. The national network of railways and the daily despatch of churns encouraged the farmer to go in for milk. This trend was accelerated by the first importation of American cheese in 1879. Only when there was a summer surplus of milk did farmers make their own cheese. You can see this in the number of cattle and pigs kept in Staffordshire from 1866 to 1914:

Years	Cattle	Pigs	
1866-70	119	53	
1871-75	135	56	
1876-80	132	50	
1881-85	142	53	
1886-90	149	52	
1891-95	158	53	
1896-1900	158	34	
1901-05	164	50	
1906-10	169	50	
1911-14	174	49	
			(10)

*(figures are in thousands and are five year averages).*

Keeping pigs was an integral part of dairying when cheese was made. They would eat its waste products. The rise in cattle numbers and a steady figure for pigs suggest either dairying for milk or cattle for beef. As the latter was unlikely during the agricultural great depression when refrigeration was bringing to this country quantities of cheap Argentinian beef, the reason was presumably an increase in milk production to supply the needs of such conurbations as Birmingham or the Potteries.

However, cheese making survived in this area in factories if not on many farms. Towards the end of the century the brewery that had been sited by the railway in Uttoxeter since 1864 ceased trading. Cheese had been made there in the summer and in 1891 a branch of the 'Farmers and Cleveland Dairy Company' was established. It did not last long but William Dainton started a cheese factory there. Great Western Metropolitan Dairies took over the site and it is now part of Unigate Foods. (11) Between 1880 and 1893 cheese factories were set up at ten villages locally, several being co-operatives. By 1914 many had closed and it was only the large factories, such as that at Uttoxeter, which survived.

Being the natural focal point for the surrounding area had always encouraged Uttoxeter in small scale industry and we have already seen examples of the range and size of local trades. Trade was essentially small scale for most of the century, although there were exceptions. At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was a large scale jewellery trade in the town organised by the Copestake brothers. They employed a hundred and forty men and eighty apprentices. There was also a putting out part of the business which involved polishing lapidaries. In the 1820's there was calico and linen weaving which may have employed nearly a hundred people. Cork cutting seems to have been a successful small industry in the first half of the century but the directories used earlier do not suggest that it was ever large in scale.

Of local builders the largest was Isaac Ward of Carter Street. Others were J. Critchlow and Sons of Church Street and Mr. Perks, who rebuilt the Lathrop Almshouses in 1849. But all these examples pale into insignificance in comparison with the develop-



THE ALMS HOUSES 1844

ment and expansion of Bamfords, which was employing six men in 1871 but five hundred by 1897. (12)

Henry Bamford came from Yoxall and married Julia Brassington in 1844 when he was 25. His father-in-law Samuel Brassington was a cooper in Uttoxeter High Street, who in 1845 purchased the shop at the corner of Market Street for his new son-in-law and daughter. This still belongs to Bamfords as the Uttoxeter Agricultural Company Limited. Henry ran the shop as an ironmonger's. He was successful. More usefully for the future though, he had a large family of thirteen children of whom seven sons reached manhood. From 1860 onwards they began to join their father in his business. Henry seems to have been content to run his ironmongery business successfully but was pushed into manufacturing as a way of using the talents of his sons. The real Bamfords, manufacturers of agricultural implements, began in 1871.

Three years earlier Henry had bought his son Samuel land for a small foundry in a coal wharf siding but in 1871 he bought him a different foundry on the south side of the town which became the Leighton ironworks part of the firm. Samuel had already shown his inventive skill in a new iron tap for water butts and in making hot air stoves, cheese presses and curd mills. However, he could not expand on his ideas until he could do his own ironwork. The new ironworks gave Samuel this chance. By 1876 there were thirty men working for the firm and they were making sheep racks, milk carriages and horse rakes among other things.

Gradually the firm expanded its catalogue making a particular mark after 1882 with the Royal 5A horse drawn mowing machine but there were now also chaff cutters, grinding and root cutting machines. The late nineteenth century was the time when farmers sought to maximise production using horse and steam power and improved implements were a vital part of their theories. In 1881 the catalogue had reached forty pages and the firm covered the full range of agricultural implements. (13) In the 1890's as more space was needed the firm began to expand along the side of the railway both at the Leighton ironworks and near Bridge Street. In 1898 the firm acquired a further twenty acres including Hockley Field. They were gradually coming to occupy all the land along the railway from Bridge Street to the Stafford Road. By the 1890's the firm had become an extensive family business and the third generation were soon to become involved.

The driving force behind the firm was Henry's eldest son Samuel. It was really to give him scope that the firm had gone into manufacturing. He appears to have been an excellent business man but Marion Bamford talks of him as overbearing, dictatorial and cruel. (14) When his brothers were introduced into the firm he retained overall control and was the chief engineer. The second brother, Henry began in the business as a traveller for his father. He came into purchasing and advertising for the expanding firm. John dealt with the management of the office and with financial affairs. The next brother, Charles, decided to become a doctor instead of joining the firm. He practised in Uttoxeter until he was fortunate enough to marry a woman of independent means. Robert was only a year younger than Charles but 15 years younger than Samuel. He does not seem to have been particularly talented in business but, as a brother, was accommodated. He was in charge of sales and wages and at least when the firm was small, made up the wage packets. Joseph on the other hand was a talented engineer. He patented an improved cash register and a cultivator. The latter was used by Ransome's. He was sent by the family to Lichfield to run a business there, the Lichfield Agricultural Company. He returned to Uttoxeter in 1905 when his older

brother Henry went to live in Stafford. The seventh of the brothers, Thomas, was the second to become a doctor. He lived in Balance Street and practised there, in time becoming Medical Officer of Health for the town.

With a father and five of his sons in the business it was not surprising that the family Bamford should continue to run their own firm for nearly 100 years without much outside help. In the year that old Henry died, 1896, Samuel introduced two of his sons, Henry and Oswald, and from then until 1914 five of the third generation came into Bamfords to join the five brothers.

Good transport was essential to business success. The branch of the Cauldon Canal opened in 1811 had encouraged industries in Uttoxeter involving coal, lime and heavy transportation, in the northern part of the town by the wharf. In 1817 Pitt, in his History of Staffordshire, talked of the prosperity brought to the town by the canal and even as late as 1850 the Post Office Directory mentioned the waterway in its description of the town. (15) An essential part of Bamfords expansion was transport. It is not without significance that their works should gradually have expanded along the railway line. The railway opened up national markets for manufacturers in small towns. Another example is brewing at Burton-upon-Trent. Between 1868 and 1894 a whole network of branch lines was built in Burton for the breweries and the town became a centre of brewing for the nation. For a long time after the coming of the railways, the canals managed to fight off their competition. Tonnages on the Trent and Mersey canal reveal a steady increase from 1848 right up to 1888. After that there was a dramatic and swift decline. (16) So just because a railway was built we must not assume that it immediately took all the trade. But in Uttoxeter's case it was so because one of the railways serving the town was built on the route of the old canal. (17)

The first railway to reach the town was the North Staffordshire in August 1848. A month later it had reached Burton. The trains came from Stoke and the idea of the line was to serve the area on a west-east axis and join up with the routes of larger companies to London and other large cities. The company had been formed in 1845 with a capital of £2,500,000. The canal companies were alert to the competition that such developments might bring and the Trent and Mersey Company actually reached a financial arrangement with the North Staffordshire Railway to protect their interests. Because of this agreement the Froghall to Uttoxeter canal was closed. The M.P. for Stoke and the chairman of the N.S.R. gave evidence to Parliament in April 1847 that this canal was losing £1000 a year and was about to be closed. By the North Staffordshire Railway Act of 2nd July, 1847, it was abandoned and the N.S.R. were able to use its bed for their next venture, the Churnet Valley Railway.

This opened in 1849 and ran northwards from Uttoxeter. It has been constructed by 600 navvies using 400 waggons, 490 barrows and 100 horses. The Stoke line went via Bramshall and entered the town from the west. It passed south of the town's centre along the present line by Picknall's Brook. The Churnet Valley line came from Rocester. It began in Macclesfield but there was also a branch for Ashbourne. There was a siding into the wharf so that the canal's facilities for unloading heavy cargoes could be used, but the main line passed to the east of the town. There was a stop at Dove Bank and the line joined that from Stoke a few hundred yards east of the Bridge Street crossing (today a bridge over the railway and the site of the present station) where there was a second station. The third station, for the Stoke line was west of the present signal box. (18)

The main change to this pattern came in 1881. A sharp curve was added north-west from the Stoke line to join the valley line. This meant that a triangle was formed and connections could be made from the Stoke line to Macclesfield or Ashbourne without changing stations. At the same time the three stations were demolished and a new and larger one built on the present site. This had four platforms and a footbridge. To make things easier for both trains and road vehicles a bridge was built over the railway and the Brookside Road goods yard entrance. This was to be the main railway system until well into the twentieth century.

However an addition was made in the 1860's to allow Uttoxeter to be linked with its county town. From 1862 to 1865 the idea of a Stafford and Uttoxeter Railway was promoted in Parliament. It was not popular with other railway companies, the North Staffordshire and the London and North Western, because they saw this little branch as opening alternative routes to London. Such routes were the key to economic success for the large companies. This led to a clause in the act whereby the Great Northern was stopped from using this branch line to divert LNWR traffic. The company to build this line had been incorporated in 1862 and the railway opened in December 1867. It actually ran from Stafford to Bramshall where there was a junction with the North Staffordshire's Stoke line. It was never a very busy line. Three passenger trains ran each way each day except Sunday when there was only one. Local people had been all for the service but it was never a paying proposition. In 1878 a receiver was appointed. In 1881 it was bought by the Great Northern Railway for £100,000. The original company had never paid any dividends. However the line was useful for transporting cattle and pigs which had reached Stafford from Wales to Uttoxeter market. It was also able to transport eastwards shoes made in Stafford.

As you can imagine the effect of all this railway development on the road traffic of Uttoxeter was severe. Turnpikes went out of business and were taken over after 1870 to become main roads. Finally in 1894 urban and rural district councils took over responsibility for the lesser highways, which had been the job of the parishes for over 300 years. Local carriers went out of business if their routes coincided with those of the railways while the stage coaches completely disappeared. Railways were cheaper, quicker and more frequent. In 1822-3 Uttoxeter had boasted daily services to Rugeley, Birmingham, London, Liverpool and Manchester, thrice weekly services to Birmingham, Derby, Newcastle-under-Lyme and Sheffield and a weekly service to Cheadle. Five inns had been to some extent supported by the coaching trade; the Black Swan, the Royal Oak, the Red Lion, the White Horse and the White Hart. The last named was the chief coaching inn of the town being the departure point for all the daily services except that to Rugeley. These businesses and everyone concerned with horses must have suffered some contraction in trade with the coming of the railways. (19)

There were also changes in recreational habits in the Victorian age which favoured organised and disciplined games at the expense of cruel and purely spectacular events. Bull baiting had taken place in Uttoxeter up to the early part of the nineteenth century. A long description of it in 1819 is to be found in the second edition of Redfern's History. But it was stopped in 1824. Horse racing continued in the early nineteenth century but not in a form in which we would recognise it. Unpleasant events occurred in the 1840's which led to its being discontinued. It was re-established in 1850 with spring and autumn meetings. It was taking place on different courses wherever they were available. Although it was organised enough for a grandstand to be built in 1862, it was dropped in favour of athletic sports in 1869 yet an attempt to revive horse racing in 1876 was successful. It was only with the opening in 1908 of a new and permanent

course for national hunt racing, next to the railway, that the sport became properly organised in Uttoxeter. (20)

It is interesting that athletic sports should have taken the place of horse racing for the second half of the century saw the mushrooming of organised sports. Schools took up the idea as did clubs all over the country. Cricket, football and athletics became newsworthy subjects and their stars, popular heroes. By the 1890's Alleyne's school had an organised football team and Uttoxeter quickly followed. There are records of Saturday cricket in Uttoxeter back to the 1860's with matches between the old boys of Alleyne's and masters and boys. There was an active cricket club in Bramshall after 1880. In the 1860's there had also been a swimming club. The most important developments though were the result of the efforts of one man — John Bamford. Towards the end of the century he bought Oldfield's Hall (now a middle school) and land around it. On the other side of the Stone road from his house he had laid out a large sports ground with a magnificent pavilion. His first love was cricket and he managed his ground so well that county matches were brought there. However his greatest success was in enticing visiting national sides to play on his ground. The 1905, 1909 and 1912 Australians played on Oldfields. In 1906 Staffordshire played the West Indians while the 1907 South Africans, famous for their four googly bowlers, played an England XI. In the following year the M.C.C. team which had toured Australia in the winter of 1907-8 came. Before 1914 the Indians were also visitors to Uttoxeter. (21) This brought great cricketers to Uttoxeter and enabled local citizens to enjoy a rare treat in the days before television. The ground was also used for the annual 'Wakes Monday Sports,' a chance for local athletes to shine.

Opportunities for physical exercise were matched by greater opportunities in education. The Victorians confidently believed in the power of education to help a man raise himself in the world. Alleyne's had been allowed to decline in the first half of the century, when Thomas Osborne was headmaster. No longer were the classics taught. It became a commercial school. This was obvious to Trinity College, Cambridge as trustees. When they approached John Kinder to succeed Thomas Osborne they added £100 to his salary and rented a house on Dove Bank for his use. Kinder's ideas for reviving the school were not popular in Uttoxeter. He made daily attendance at services in the parish church compulsory. A committee for reform and reorganisation was set up in reply. Among its leaders were a local flour dealer J. Vernon and J.T. and G. Bladon who were leasees of the rectorial tithes and leading men of the town. They wanted more money made available from Alleyne's estate for the school and an end to denominational rules. The issue went to court and lasted nearly four years. The result was in the best British spirit of compromise. It was ruled that the college did not have to pay any more money but that Anglican religious rules were inappropriate as Thomas Alleyne died a Roman Catholic. It was suggested that new rules be devised. The case cost Uttoxeter citizens £700 but was worth it in its results.

Religious education was to follow the teachings of the Church of England but not be compulsory. However all had to attend prayers and Bible reading classes to maintain the Christian foundation. The school was to be split into classical and commercial sides to accommodate the wishes of Trinity and the town. There were to be up to 70 boys of whom 10 were free scholars. The head was also allowed to take 20 boarders. The master's house on Dove Bank was bought as was the surrounding land and a completely new school was built on the site. It cost Trinity over £3000. In many small ways the 1860's saw the school begin to resemble schools of today.

Candidates sat for Oxford and Cambridge local examinations. Scholarships for free places were decided by entrance examinations. Reports were sent to parents. Regular inspections of the school were made. Organised games began. Under the Endowed Schools Act of 1869 reports were made on Alleyne's in 1869 and 1871. They saw the school as coming near the ideal of a second grade school. (22) Such a verdict might not have pleased local people but it was a fair assessment of the place in comparison with the rich and successful of the public schools.

Other schools were established in the town to provide a much greater number of children with the chance to learn. A 'National School' was erected in Bradley Street in 1835 although there had been a first attempt at such a school made in 1829. There were two rooms, each 53 feet by 18 feet, one for boys and the other for girls. A separate infants room was built in 1840 by Mrs. Hart. By 1872 Bradley Street could take 300 children but it was not big enough to cope with all the children needing education since the 1870 Education Act had begun the move to compulsory education up to 12. (23) In the High Street, behind the Wesleyan church was a 'Normal School,' run by Mrs. Harris in the 1860's. The schoolroom was nearly as large as the Bradley Street classrooms and had originally been built for the Methodists' Sunday School. The Roman Catholics ran a small school in Balance Street behind their church. Just off Pinfold Lane another school was opened in the middle of the century. This was provided entirely by Joseph Bladon. It is mentioned in his will of January 1863 among his charitable bequests, although it was set up in his lifetime. Under the 1870 Act a local Board of Education could have been set up if the educational provision was inadequate. That no such board was established is proof that Uttoxeter was already providing adequately a rudimentary education for all.

Uttoxeter had a few remarkable citizens in this century but they were not all the products of her schools. Mary Howitt was a very well-known and respected authoress in her day. One poem of hers continues to be popularly known and quoted today: 'Will you walk into my parlour?' said the spider to the fly. She was born Mary Botham in Balance Street in 1799. Her family were strongly Quaker and Mary was sent to Quaker schools in Croydon and Sheffield soon after she reached ten. She was engaged at the age of 19 to William Howitt aged 26. After getting married at the meeting house in Uttoxeter they continued to live locally for a few years while they produced their first literary works. Two of her books represent Uttoxeter and her own upbringing: Woodleighton (a three volume novel) and My Own Story (one of a series of thirteen books).

On a more parochial level we should consider Francis Redfern as a writer well worthy of our attention. He was a successful cooper who had been born at Tissington in 1823. He came to Uttoxeter as an apprentice to Sam Brassington, later to be Henry Bamford's father-in-law. He became a Wesleyan local preacher and was very keen on self improvement. By 1851 he had his own business in Carter Street but was inspired by Hawthorne's visit to the town to see Dr. Johnson's place of penance, to begin work on a history of Uttoxeter. The first edition was published in 1865 but he was not a man easily satisfied. For the next sixteen years he worked on a second edition which was really a new work. These books, by an amateur historian with little or no formal education, are a remarkable tribute to Redfern's determination and the confidence of the age. (24)

Other individuals left no such appealing record as Redfern's history but their lives are recorded briefly in memorial plaques in the parish church. What of Edward Dams?

An orphan, he was brought up by an uncle in Uttoxeter and attended Alleyne's school about 1860. He went into clock making and eventually had his own business. However it is his sons that make him remarkable. His six boys all attended Alleyne's and went on to university. They also all took holy orders. Three became cathedral precentors at Carlisle, Manchester and Westminster Abbey.

The parish church of Uttoxeter underwent its own remarkable transformation in the nineteenth century. Only the spire and tower are left to us of the mediaeval building. In the early nineteenth century this was found to be inadequate in two ways. Firstly more seatings were needed and secondly it was thought undesirable by some that in the old church there should be no distinction between a man and his servants. This latter explains the design of the present church with large galleries on the north and south sides. The spire was hit by lightning in 1814 and damaged but was repaired. The main body of the church was rebuilt between 1827 and 1828. In 1825 James Trubshaw attended vestry meetings of St. Mary's to talk about the fate of the church. In the following year it was decided that it must all come down bar the tower. Trubshaw and Johnson designed the new building which was built in the Decorated English style. (25) However it is all an illusion. The whole is a brick structure only faced with stone four inches thick. The roof inside is supported by six arches but they are not of stone either. They are brick plastered over. The windows are almost certainly all nineteenth century and the East window was a joint gift of Thomas Hart and Sir Thomas Cotton Sheppard of Crakemarsh Hall at a cost of £256.

The cost of the re-building was considerable but is hard to be exact. Trubshaw and Johnson received £5597 for their work and the total cost was between £6000 and £6500. £1632 was raised by subscription including £130 from Thomas Hart, £200 from the canons of Windsor, £100 from George IV and over £50 from each of six local families. Redfern and Torrance disagree about exactly how the rest of the money was raised. (26) The old pews were sold for over £600 and new box pews replaced them. Sale of the latter, which could seat nearly 800, for use by local families raised well over £1000. For providing 422 free seatings in the gallery the church secured a grant of £400 from the Society for Building Churches.

We can get a clear view of the church both as a building and as a religious centre from a visitation made to the parish on 14th July, 1830 by Archdeacon Hodson of Stafford. In 1824 Henry Ryder had been translated from the diocese of Gloucester to Lichfield. He was a conscientious, evangelical bishop and the youngest son of the first Baron Harrowby, the leading layman of his day. (27) He began putting his diocese in order and one of the men he brought from Gloucester to help him was Hodson, who became Archdeacon of Stafford after a few years. He generally found things satisfactory on his visit. The building was described as handsome and Gothic. He mistakenly described the walls as stone. He said that the pulpit and reading desk were made of handsome materials but were not well placed and were of clumsy execution. This last would not have pleased Trubshaw as he carved the pulpit himself. There was an organ plus galleries on three sides, presumably the third being at the west end in front of the tower. The most surprising detail of the report on the buildings is that Hodson said there was much damp on the walls especially at the east end and in the vestry. This in a building that was just two years old.

Hodson was concerned about the security of the tower and spire. He was generally happy about the churchyard but saw some hedging and ditching as necessary.

Of services, he found that there were two full services every Sunday, prayers on Wednesday and Friday and the sacrament administered monthly to about 50 communicants. The vicar took half the services and lived in the parish. However, the commodious vicarage was occupied by the curate, Rev. John Dashwood, whose salary was £50 a year.

On a second visit, made in September 1837, Archdeacon Hodson found everything admirable and his recommendations of seven years before fulfilled. All he suggested this time was that a font be provided, the heating apparatus be repaired and the iron rails round the church painted. (28)

But all was not well in the parish. A dispute arose in 1837 that led to an exchange of accusations through pamphlets. (29) The vicar at the time, and from 1829 to 1854, was Clement Francis Broughton. He was also vicar of Norbury. He was the first to go to print with a "Statement of Certain Facts relative to the Curacy of Uttoxeter." In this he wished to put his own arguments over the prospective removal of Mr. Dashwood as curate. He accused him of a want of activity especially since he, the vicar, was now less able to do his part. Dashwood had shown Broughton's letter of dismissal around and to the Archdeacon. Broughton had followed up with a second letter to Dashwood saying that he wanted to take possession of the vicarage at Michaelmas. Broughton also defended himself from an attack by Joseph Bladon, the leasee of the rectorial tithes and glebe lands. Bladon had approached the Bishop saying that Broughton really wanted a second curate and financial provision had been made by himself, the canons of Windsor and in the tithe commutation, which would have made this possible. Broughton, in the pamphlet, said he was talking of having a curate at Norbury where he was living and not at Uttoxeter, that Dashwood could have done the work in Uttoxeter but had not and that the extra money had not been for a curate.

In a "Reply to The Statement . . ." by F. Blagg, a local lawyer, this new disputant wanted Broughton to specify his complaints against Dashwood. He had already secured over two hundred signatures on a testimonial for the curate. Blagg accused Broughton of neglecting his duty and said that Dashwood had done services for the vicar. He also defended Dashwood by referring to his thirty six years as a clergyman. Joseph Bladon also went into print. He gave a detailed analysis of Broughton's Uttoxeter finances. By his estimate the living was worth £348 a year. Tithes had been commuted for £200, the glebe was worth £108, Bladon himself had given £20 from the rectory for a curate and fees were worth £20 a year. Bladon intended to show in his pamphlet that Broughton had the resources to hire a second curate and ought to do so.

The fourth pamphlet, by Broughton again, tells us what happened. This time the vicar was more generous in his assessment of Dashwood. The curate had appealed to the Bishop, Samuel Butler the former Headmaster of Shrewsbury School. He decided in Broughton's favour because he wanted him to reside in Uttoxeter. In October 1837 Dashwood withdrew. It is interesting that we have this series of pamphlets. They give us an insight into the minds of the clergy and churchmen of the 1830's.

Broughton had no more trouble at Uttoxeter. He was succeeded in 1854 by Henry Abud, who had already served as curate in the town. He held the living for nearly fifty years, till 1902, and was a great patriarchal Victorian clergyman. He resided in the vicarage and improved that. It was essentially an Elizabethan building with Georgian windows and brick facing. The central staircase probably goes back even further.

Abud enlarged the dining room by putting on a bay window and thus making it big enough to hold a billiard table. He installed a toilet and washroom on the ground floor, one of the earliest flush lavatories in the town.

His improvements in the church were more far reaching. First there was a renovation in 1860. In 1875 the six bells were re-hung and two new ones added. In the following year new chimes and a carillon were added (the tunes of which remain the same to this day). A brass lectern was given in the same year. 1877 saw a major extension of the chancel by five yards and the erection of the reredos as a Kynnersley memorial. The organ was also moved from the west end, the total cost of all the work being £1100. In 1888-9 the chancel was again lengthened. Besides St. Mary's, there were expansions elsewhere in the parish. Stramshall had had its own church built in 1852 and became a separate parish in 1854. The vicar of Uttoxeter was patron to this parish of 350 - 400 people. In 1861 a totally new cemetery and burial ground was opened. This was sited on the west of the town on the Stafford Road. It had its own Gothic style chapels. In 1869 a mission church was built on the Heath from the munificence of Dr. Taylor. It was enlarged and re-built in 1874-5 and at the same time a Cottagers' Church in Pinfold Lane was established. (30)

Abud achieved all this without being the holder of a very wealthy living. His money payment instead of receiving tithes was set at £200 but with the agricultural depression after 1875 it would have gone down. Fees and the glebe land would have helped but the living was probably never very much above £350 a year. This, for the cure of 5000 souls was not excessive, especially compared with many good rural livings. The rectors were to receive £728 from the tithe commutation and the Bishop of Lichfield had a salary of £4200 a year.

But we should not get carried away with the idea that the Victorian age was completely religious and strongly Anglican. In 1851 Horace Mann organised a religious census of the country on Sunday, 30th March. Many criticisms have been levelled at the results but it remains a valuable indicator of the general situation. From it we learn that only just over half of the population attended a place of worship that day and in Staffordshire the figure was just under 50%. The Anglican proportion of churchgoers was only 52%. (31) In Uttoxeter non-Anglicans were on the increase by mid-century. The Methodists had grown in numbers after their chapel opened in 1812. The Primitive Methodists had established a chapel in Carter Street in 1842. The Congregationalists built their own chapel in Carter Street in 1827-8, very similar in design to the Methodist chapel. Their minister from 1825 to 1865 was John Cooke. Redfern even mentions the Plymouth Brethren as having established a room at the Red Lion for their meetings in about 1850.

The Roman Catholics had a new church built in 1839. It was a small building but was described by its great architect A.W.N. Pugin as "the first catholic structure erected in this country in accordance with the rules of ancient ecclesiastical architecture since the days of the pretended Reformation." (32) Unfortunately the original is now only a part of the whole. Side aisles and a porch have been added by extensions made in 1879 and 1914 (the latter due to a gift of £4000 from Samuel Bamford).

Uttoxeter saw major changes in its buildings and industry in the Victorian period. Even so the basis of its wealth and the reason for its existence were still agricultural marketing. Bamfords helped to change industry in the town from small to large scale but their wealth and success were based on agriculture. Fortunately for the town and

area the Great Depression in agriculture did not have disastrous effects because milk production remained viable. The advent of the railway aided the town by giving its products access to wider markets. It also reduced the isolation of the town. But still the character of the place did not alter dramatically.

NOTES:

- ( 1) V.C.H. vol. I ed. W. Page (1908) pp.290,329
- ( 2) A Social and Economic History of Britain 1760-1960: P. Gregg (1962) p.580
- ( 3) V.C.H. vol. VI ed. M.W. Greenslade and D.A. Johnson (1979) p.121
- ( 4) V.C.H. vol. VI p. 116 quoting F.M.L. Thompson: English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century.
- ( 5) Directories - Pigot & Co. (1822-3) p.487-8, White's Staffordshire (1834) pp.761-70, Pigot & Co. (1841) pp.76-80, Slater's Midland Counties (1850) p.101-2
- ( 6) M.W. Greenslade and D.G. Stuart: A History of Staffordshire (1965) p.56
- ( 7) W.G. Torrance: Following Francis Redfern (n.d.) part X p.2
- ( 8) F. Redfern: History of Uttoxeter (1865) p.300
- ( 9) Redfern: Uttoxeter p.301
- (10) V.C.H. vol. VI p.130
- (11) Torrance: Following Redfern, part VIII p.37-8
- (12) For the Bamfords see M. Bamford: A Staffordshire Family (1978) and Torrance: Following Redfern, part VIII.
- (13) Bamford: Staffs. Family pp.95-8
- (14) Bamford: Staffs. Family pp.27-30
- (15) Pitt: History of Staffordshire (1817) p.206 and Post Office Directory (1850) p.345
- (16) V.C.H. vol. II ed. M.W. Greenslade and J. Jenkins (1967) pp.298,300-1
- (17) For the whole area see R. Christiansen: The West Midlands (Vol. 7 of a Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain) (1973) and "Manifold": The North Staffordshire Railway (1952)
- (18) Torrance: Following Redfern, part VIII pp.18-20
- (19) Pigot and Co. Directory (1822-3) p.488
- (20) V.C.H. vol. II p.367-8
- (21) Bamford: Staffs. Family p.33, Handy Guide to Uttoxeter (1907) and Borough Pocket Guide 407 - Uttoxeter (1908)
- (22) W.G. Torrance: The History of Alleyne's Grammar School (1959) pp.31-46
- (23) Post Office Directory (1872) p.768
- (24) Torrance: Following Redfern, part I pp.5-11
- (25) A. Bayliss: The Life and Work of James Trubshaw (1978) pp.26-8
- (26) Redfern: Uttoxeter p.167-8 and Torrance: Following Redfern, part IX p.14-5
- (27) C.F.K. Brown: History of the English Clergy 1800-1900 (1950) p.89
- (28) Visitations of the Archdeaconry of Stafford 1829-41, S.H.C. 4th series X (1980) p.134
- (29) These pamphlets may be consulted in the William Salt Library, Stafford.
- (30) A chronology of the parish church is displayed at the west end of St. Mary's Uttoxeter. Extra information from Rev. W.H.O. Moss
- (31) V.C.H. vol. III ed. M.W. Greenslade (1970) pp.74, 131-2 quoting the 1851 Census report.
- (32) V.C.H. vol. III p.113

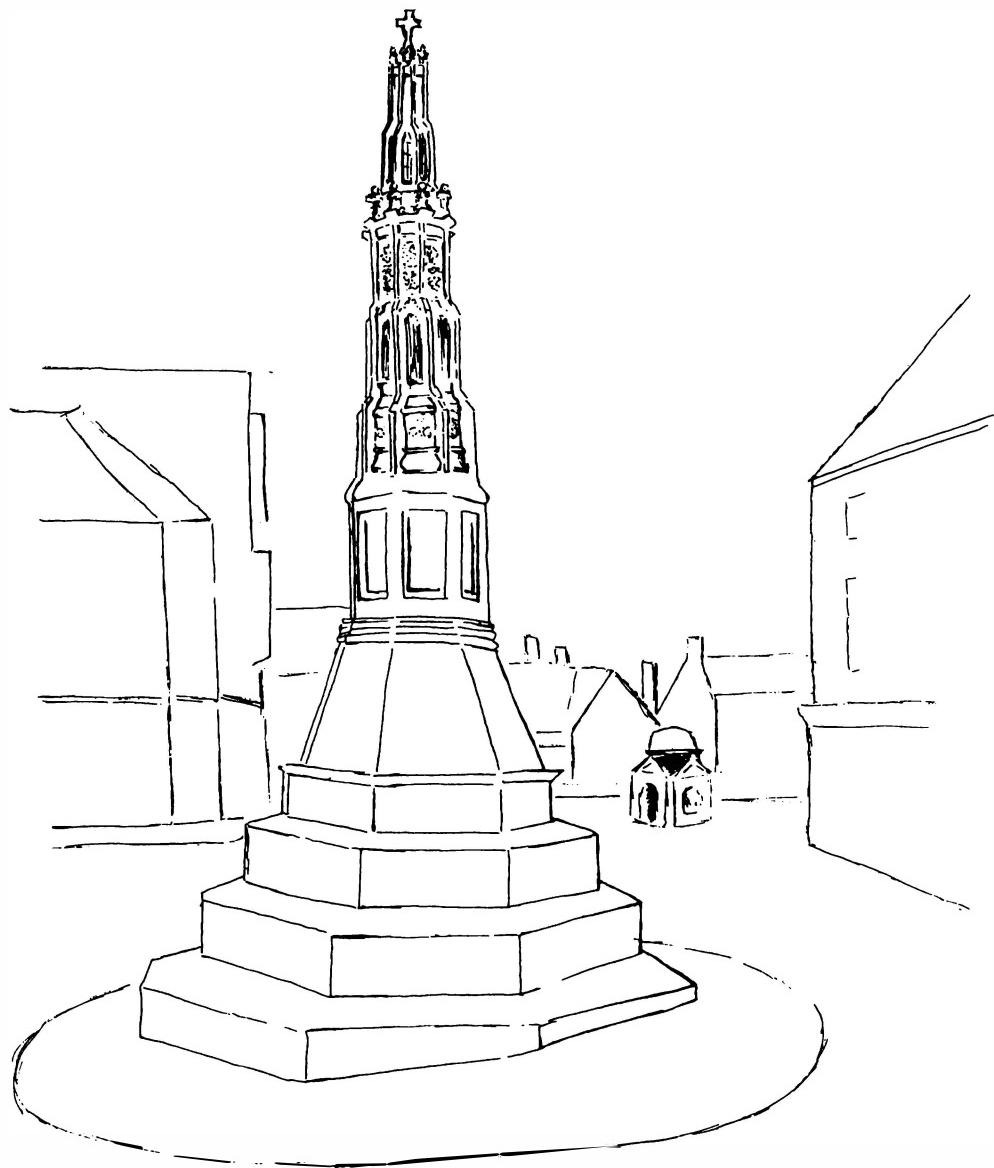
## CHAPTER 8 — The Modern Age (since 1914)

For any historian writing about his own century the problems are great, whatever the field of study. In the first place there is a superabundance of material. Records are more complete, memories fresher and every kind of source available. For Uttoxeter there are, of course, peoples' life stories but also such new sources as school magazines, council records, company accounts and local newspapers. Secondly, the historian has a much more difficult job in selecting what is important. With such a mass of material available it is easy to end up writing a chronicle or catalogue. Such a list of events has some value but it is not history. Selection is all important if we are to make sense of our past. But what are the criteria used for this selection? In the case of Uttoxeter it must be how the events of the town relate to our knowledge of the country as a whole. Thirdly we have the problem of distance. The closer one is to events the more difficult it is to assess their importance with any attempt at objectivity. A new facility provided for the town's people at great expense and effort may look like a breakthrough for the town but if such facilities were provided in other towns twenty years earlier it is not significant as such. Fourthly there is the danger of using one's personal experience as a touchstone for attitudes and interpretations. When one deals with events of a long time ago, the historian uses his accumulated knowledge plus imagination to work towards an intelligible interpretation. In dealing with the very modern period it is easy to substitute personal experience for acquired knowledge and prejudice for imagination.

Bearing all this in mind, this chapter will be shorter than most of the others, and will not include a great mass of detail. It will be even more selective than the earlier chapters.

The year 1914 was a divide. The Great War deprived us of a generation of men. Barbara Tuchman puts it eloquently: "The Great War of 1914-18 lies like a band of scorched earth dividing that time from ours. In wiping out so many lives which would have been operative on the years that followed, in destroying beliefs, changing ideas and leaving incurable wounds of disillusion, it created a physical as well as psychological gulf between two epochs." (1) In Uttoxeter death came too early to many families as a result of that war. The Boer War of 1899-1902 had claimed five lives, the tally for the Great War was 172 for the town and 8 for the rural part of the parish. Out of a population of five and a half thousand that represents over 3%, all men bar one and all of the age to be fathers. Among those who died were Colonel Abud, son of the vicar from 1854 to 1902, and Captain Oswald Bamford. The latter was the second son of Samuel Bamford, the managing director of the company. He had been working for the company for nearly twenty years before the war broke out and died at the Battle of Loos in 1915. This must have been a severe loss to Samuel because, of his four sons by his first marriage one was a priest and one mentally unstable. It also increased the burden on his oldest son, Henry. Among other families there were 28 who lost at least two members in the fighting. Two Brassingtons were killed. It was Brassington money that had bought old Henry Bamford his first shop. There were also two Tortoiseshells on the list. Their father, George Tortoiseshell was a remarkable local figure. He died in 1938 but during his working life had been headmaster of the Boys' School in Bradley Street for 41 years. (2)

As was common all over the country, a war memorial was raised to commemorate the dead. It took the form of an ornate, castellated obelisk with the names of the



**THE WAR MEMORIAL IN THE MARKET SQUARE**

dead inscribed upon it. The difference was in the siting. It stands at the Bridge Street end of the market. But there used to be four shops and houses on that site, called Bear Hill. These were demolished and in their place was sited the war memorial.

The Second World War had a less tragic effect on the town's population. Forty five men were lost but as a proportion of the population of about seven thousand that is less than 1%. Their names were added to the War Memorial. In 1956 they and their earlier, fallen comrades were honoured in the parish church. The east end of the north aisle was made into a memorial chapel.

Despite such losses the town of Uttoxeter has grown greatly during the present century. Whereas in the nineteenth century it showed little growth up to 1880 when the population of the country doubled, it at least kept pace with national figures between 1881 and 1901. There followed a period of stagnation as the following table shows:

1881	4981	1931	6234
1891	5477	1941	no census - war
1901	6204	1951	7447
1911	5717	1961	8185
1921	5363	1971	8910

Decline from the beginning of the century only began to be reversed during the 1920's. Since then the figures have shown a steady rise with the population in the 1970's nearly 50% bigger than it was at the turn of the century and 67% bigger than the figures for 1921.

This rise in population is reflected in the increasing provision for education made in the town. This did not immediately have an effect on Alleyne's Grammar School. Under A.T. Daniel, headmaster from 1901 to 1923, playing fields were added, the curriculum broadened and some building done but it was still a small school. In line with the attempt of the 1918 Education Act to widen the opportunities for secondary education for all classes, a process which had been started by the 1902 Act, the school was handed over to the County Council in 1921. It became one of their maintained secondary schools but only had about 100 boys during the 1920's. So, for the majority of the population in Uttoxeter secondary education was reserved for the very able or well off. Although there were free places at Alleyne's there were also places for those willing to pay.

With the school leaving age remaining at fourteen for all the years between the wars, most pupils attended just one school, usually one of the Bradley Street 'National' Schools. They entered at five and were educated within its walls for nine years. There were also the Heath County School and St. Joseph's. During the inter-war period a Uttoxeter High School for Girls was set up but this did not greatly widen the educational opportunities of ordinary people. (The county library now uses part of its buildings). The big break-through came with the change in provision at the implementation of the 1944 Education Act. By this primary education to the age of eleven was recognised as a separate entity. At eleven pupils were to take a test and then be sent to grammar, technical or modern schools. Alleyne's and the girls' high school became the selective grammar schools for the town. Two new secondary modern schools were established for boys and girls. The boys' school was set up off Springfield Road, behind the cricket ground. For the girls' school, Oldfields Hall was purchased.

The old centres of education, Bradley Street, Heath County and St. Joseph's were found to be no longer adequate for primary schooling. A Church of England junior school was established off Heath Road, while to replace the old schools, Picknall's County Primary School was built next to the Lido Swimming Pool. The Roman Catholics had their own school in Springfield Road. However the continuing expansion of the population in the 1960's and early 1970's meant that more school places were needed. In 1964 the two grammar schools merged to form a mixed school of over six hundred but the current of educational thinking had turned against selection.

Comprehensive secondary schooling was the vogue. The secondary schools as they existed in Uttoxeter were not suitable for re-organisation into comprehensive schools. They were really too small. However they proved ideal for an alternative scheme. By this, primary and secondary schools were replaced by first, middle and upper schools. The ages of transfer became nine and thirteen. Picknall's became a first school along with the church of England school, now renamed St. Mary's First School. To cater for the expansion in housing in the north-west of the town, Tynsel Parkes First School was built. The Roman Catholic primary school became a first school as well.

The two secondary modern schools made ideal sites for the necessary middle schools, now called Oldfields Hall and Windsor Park. Alleyne's retained its status as an academic school, as it became the one upper school for all the town. Thus in this century education from five right up to eighteen has gradually been made available for all. In the early part of the century money was a barrier to secondary education for any but a handful of poor children. After 1945 the ability to pass the eleven plus became the key to opportunity in academic education. Since 1974 the system has broadened again.

Other changes in the town have perhaps been less fundamental but have had an effect none the less. In terms of industry there has been an increase in large scale production, in line with national trends over the century. Bamfords has had to reduce its production and labour force in times of economic recession but it has grown. If we consider J.C.B. at Rocester as an extension of the Bamfords empire, the growth has been considerable. In 1912 the firm had built a new foundry at a cost of £70,000. Although their production was to an extent diversified during the Great War into producing hand grenade bodies and 4.5 inch shells, they still made a large quantity of very necessary agricultural machinery. With the threat of unrestricted submarine warfare by the Germans in the Atlantic, Britain had to produce all the food that it could. The demand is reflected in the wages paid to agricultural workers during this period.

<i>Weekly wages of agricultural workers</i>	1890's	15s (75p)
	1917	24s (£1.20)
	1918	26s to 35s (£1.30 to £1.75)
	1919	38s 6d (£1.93)
1890 to 1932	1921	46s 6d (£2.33)
	1924	30s (£1.50)
	1932	30s (£1.50)

Bamfords had to provide the machinery for the country's farms. In 1916 the firm became a private limited company. In the 1920's it expanded its markets by producing stationary oil engines. This was in tune with the gradual increase in farm mechanization that took place between the wars. Tractors were still less usual than horses but stationary engines could be used for driving machinery where manpower had been used before. During the 1930's the company was hit, like everybody, by the slump. However in 1933 they produced a mower, specifically designed for use with a tractor. This was another sign of the advance of mechanization.

During the second world war the company continued to produce mowers and did some sub-contracted war work. The intensification of farming after the war and the "green revolution" of the 1950's and 1960's, which vastly increased agricultural production, meant prosperity for Bamfords. Assembly line production was introduced, a new fabrication and press shop built in 1949 and new offices constructed in 1952. The situation was such that when the company went public in 1958 and sold its shares on the Stock Exchange, its capital of £1 million was oversubscribed ten times. (4)

A major re-building of 250,000 square feet took place in the late 1950's. By 1971 the company employed 865 people and although this figure had been reduced to 750 by 1978, Bamfords was still the town's largest employer. The world depression of the late 1970's hit the company badly and they were forced to call in the liquidator in June 1980. The resulting unemployment hit the town badly. Late in 1981 the firm began to trade again as Bamford's International with a new owner.

However, a new enterprise rivalled Bamfords as an employer and that was the biscuit factory, offering employment to many women of the town. C.H. Elkes ran a confectionery and catering business from a shop on the corner of Carter Street and the High Street. After service in the Great War his son S.H. Elkes joined him. In 1924 the son took over and began making biscuits. Growing demand led to him setting up his first factory in 1927. C.H. Elkes, the father, died in 1929. The factory expanded until 500 people were employed at the time war broke out in 1939. S.H. Elkes died in 1956 to be succeeded by his son Alan. The factory had been much improved since the early days and by the 1970's a wide variety of biscuits was being produced. The firm lost its special Uttoxeter connection in 1973 when it became part of Adam's Foods Limited. (5)

Another change in scale has been the expansion of the Unigate creamery now run by the Milk Marketing Board. Its ownership changed often during this century but the factory has expanded with the increase in milk production in Staffordshire. There has been a steady increase in the number of cattle in the county and the recent figures for milk production reflect this: 1949-50 – 77 million gallons; 1965 – 92 million gallons. (6) The introduction of the Milk Marketing Board in 1933, with its guaranteed market for milk, was a spur to dairy farming as has been the spread of Friesian herds instead of dairy short-horn cattle in the county, particularly since 1945.

While the development of the railways had been very important in the economic expansion of the Victorian age, during this century the railway has declined around Uttoxeter despite the industrial expansion described above. The first line to go was that to Stafford. It had been running at a loss when the Great Northern took it over in 1881. In 1923 many small railways were amalgamated into the "Big Four." In subsequent branch line closures, the Stafford line was closed to passenger traffic in December 1939. During the subsequent war the line was used to transport ammunition from the Bramshall depot but the track was finally closed in March 1951 and the track lifted in November 1959. (7)

The Churnet Valley line also had to go with the Beeching cuts in branch lines of the early 1960's. The line to Ashbourne survived until November 1954. 1960 saw the end to regular services from Uttoxeter to Macclesfield. A workman's train continued to run to Uttoxeter from Leek but this was discontinued in June 1965. (8) All that was left to the town was the line from Stoke and on to Derby.

With the loss of some of the railway transport to and from Uttoxeter, the town came to rely more and more on cars and lorries. The increase in traffic on the roads could have been catastrophic for Uttoxeter. The A50 from Stoke to Derby was a busy road and its traffic could have choked the town. Fortunately a by-pass was built to the north of the town which considerably reduced congestion.

Since 1945 many changes have occurred in the life-style of all the people of this country. Prosperity has given a standard of living which a working man of a hundred years ago would consider opulent. The state has become a welfare agency offering everybody health care, pensions and a measure of protection against destitution. Yet in Uttoxeter serious attempts were made to provide for the old and ill of the town even after the welfare services became available, in the best traditions of the town's charities.

Wilfred House was opened as a welfare centre. It had cost over £20,000 and was named after Wilfrid Elkes, its chief benefactor. The Hermitage, a house on the Heath, became a convalescent home. Dr. Charles Bamford and his wife Ellen had lived there. They had no children. The doctor died in 1922 and his wife in 1942. It was originally for ladies but with bungalows for eight couples. At St. Mary's Mount on the Heath a children's nursing home was set up by C.H. Elkes. This took refugees in during the second world war. Later the British Red Cross Society established a residential centre there for thirty people. Even with the coming of the welfare state it was necessary to provide residential care for the elderly. This was enhanced in Uttoxeter after 1954 with the conversion of Kirk House, Balance Street into a home for thirty two elderly people.

Details of all the facilities offered by the town today may be most economically found in the official guide. (9) However, the town has lost a lot of its independence of action as a result of the local government re-organisation of 1972. Instead of being the focus of an urban district council that even ran its own racecourse, Uttoxeter has become part of the East Staffordshire District Council. Even the rights associated with the traditional market have had to be surrendered to this new authority. Uttoxeter retains its special character as a market town but it no longer has real power and influence to decide its own fate.

The history of Uttoxeter may not be studded with major historical characters or events but its past bears witness to its important and continuing function as an integral part of the agricultural economy. If Uttoxeter had not existed some other village would have had to be invested with its qualities. Local farming needed Uttoxeter as much as the town needed the farmer. This interdependence is the key to understanding the town's past.

#### NOTES:

- ( 1) B. Tuchman: *The Proud Tower* (1966) p.xiii
- ( 2) Staffordshire Roll of Honour (1919) p.61-2
- ( 3) V.C.H. vol. VI ed. M.W. Greenslade and D.A. Johnson (1979) p.144-5
- ( 4) M. Bamford: *A Staffordshire Family* (1978) pp.103-8
- ( 5) W.G. Torrance: *Following Francis Redfern* (n.d.) part IX pp.29-34
- ( 6) V.C.H. vol. VI p.133
- ( 7) R. Christiansen: *The West Midlands* (1973) p.269-70
- ( 8) Christiansen: *West Midlands* p.207

- 9) Uttoxeter Official Guide (n.d.) copies of which may be obtained from the Council Offices.

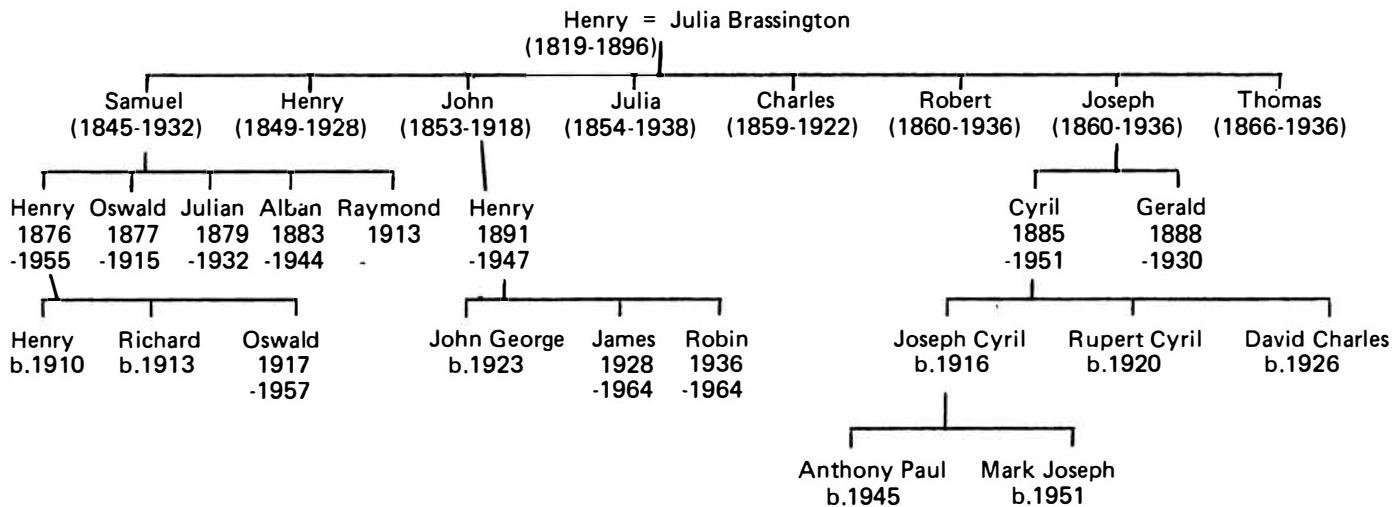
## APPENDIX A — Vicars of Uttoxeter

<i>(One date indicates when that vicar is mentioned.)</i>	1306	John de Hungerford
	1310	Stephen de Hungerford & William de Longedon
	1327	Robert de Walkington
<i>One date followed by an arrow shows that the date of his institution is known.</i>	1331	Robert de Suthrey
	1348	John Peverel
	1350 →	John Schiret
	1353-7	Robert Arterbrugg
<i>One date preceded by an arrow shows the date of his resignation — res; deprivation — dep; death — d.)</i>	1357 →	Robert de Samston
	→ 1381	John de Lendal
	1381-3	John Draghton
	1383 →	John de Chichestre
	1386-96	Robert Bolton
	1396-1414	Richard (or John) Rolff
	1414-23	Nicholas Bradlaugh (or Bradley)
	1423-31	Charles le Taylor
	1431 →	Nicholas Cave
	1440-5	Alan Porter
	1445-6	Thomas Pyttys
	1446-56	Richard Parlabrey
	1456-61	John Baker
	1461-3	Richard Braunston
	1463-1501	Thomas Blysse
	1501-3	Thomas Welton
	1503 →	Edward Wettonne
	1533	Thomas Smith
	→ 1538 (d)	William Tull
	1539-46 (res)	William Brymleay
	1546 →	Thomas Aynsworth
	1554-7 (res)	Nicholas Harwar
	1557-9 (res)	George Hilton
	1562-6 (dep)	Arthur Blunt
	1566-1617 (d)	Thomas Barnes
	1617-53 (d)	Thomas Lightfoot
	1653-8 (res)	Lawrence Dawson
	1658-82 (res)	Michael Edge
	1682-1725 (d)	Richard Jackson
	1726-7 (res)	John Lidgould
	1727-48 (d)	Henry Cotton
	1748-68 (d)	George Malbon
	1768-91 (d)	Athanasius Herring
	1791-1815	Whittington Landon
	1815-29 (d)	Henry Fowler
	1829-54 (d)	Clement Broughton
	1854-1902 (d)	Henry Abud
	1902-9	Adolphus Parry-Evans
	1909-15	William Granville-Sharp
	1915-28	Leslie Smith
	1928-46	Wilfrid Charlton
	1946-54	Michael Clarke

1954-6	John Nias
1956-66	Percy Hardy
1966-	William Moss

Sources: A framed chronological list at the back of the parish church, Rev. W.S. Hutchinson: The Archdeaconry of Stoke-on-Trent (1893) p.142-3,  
Staffordshire Incumbents (1530-1680) S.H.C. (1915) pp.294,296.

## APPENDIX B – The Bamford Family (the leading members)



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